

SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW: THE EXISTENCE OF FLEXING CULTURE AS A LIFESTYLE FOR TODAY'S INDONESIAN GENERATION Z

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Abstract: *We live in a world where status is determined by wearing a logo, driving a sports car, listening with AirPods. The aim of this research is to answer the role of social media in social culture, especially the flexing culture phenomenon. This research applies the Systematic Literature Review method. Based on the results of a systematic literature review, within two weeks the researcher found 10 journals related to the culture of showing off wealth (flexing culture) and took three of them which according to the author were in accordance with what the author wanted to find. The researcher used the GARUDA portal and Google Scholar as tools. In searching for these journals. The findings show that social media can influence a netizen's lifestyle. Either from the way of thinking or behaving.*

Keywords: *Systematic Literature Review, social media, flexing culture, flex.*

INTRODUCTION

The growth of social media and real-time updates from every corner of the space makes people consciously or unconsciously publish everything they want to show. People who have a lot of followers on their social media accounts tend to be seen as having more influence, and they feel the need to show where they are, what they eat, who they are friends with, and the things they own. This phenomenon is in accordance with the ideology of consumerism explained by John Storey in his book *Cultural Studies and The Study of Popular Culture: Theories and Methods* in 1996 concerning the Ideology of Consumerism. This ideology states that we must find suggestions for the meaning of our lives in what we consume, not in what we produce. This thinking fits several behaviors that have recently grown in society, especially social media users, namely flexing culture.

Some people also flex by showing off their achievements and accomplishments, for example celebrities, YouTubers, influencers, and vloggers. Pierre Bourdieu (1984) argues that culture of life (lifestyle, etc.) is an important area for struggle between various social groups and classes. Cultural consumption 'tends, whether consciously and intentionally or not, to fulfill a social function in the form of legitimizing social differences.

Research put forward by a psychologist state that a person's habit of flexing or showing wealth will make them obsessed with doing this repeatedly (Musman, 2020). Once an individual flexes, he can repeat it many times without thinking about the impact on himself, let alone other people. Tim Kasser, a professor of Social Psychology and Economic Psychology in the United States, through 200 studies found that people tend to support materialism, which makes these people less empathetic, less generous, more competitive, and more likely to choose not to pay attention to environmental sustainability. They will support dangerous and discriminatory beliefs.

This phenomenon of showing off is happening more and more with the growth of social media. People are increasingly showing off their wealth, such as cars, luxury bags and expensive watches. This is done to show social status, create an impression on other people, and demonstrate ability (Darmalaksana, 2022). This activity is not only carried out by the upper social class but also in various circles or groups, including the lower middle class. Reporting from Kompas.com, according to business expert Rhenald Kasali, flexing is widely used as a marketing strategy. With social media, they want to be seen engaging or even collaborating with people who have a large following as part of their new marketing strategy that will attract a new market of customers. A group of people who financially cannot afford these brands will be interested in buying these items as their role models, or influencers will use them, or even become ambassadors of these brands.

The trend of flexing or showing off one's wealth often appears with the term crazy rich on social media. Flexing is a culture that someone does to get something they want. Showing one's social status or position, showing one's greatness, or showing off is also a marketing strategy in business to gain more profits. The phenomenon of showing off can occur in the environment around us, for example a neighbor showing off his luxury car, someone who has a high position at work, or mothers showing off their jewelry via social media so that other people are impressed to see it. This is one culture that should be limited to overreacting. It is feared that there will be a cultural change that will be followed by society. In this paper, the researcher will try to collect previous research on this topic, select several journals that are relevant to the candidate dissertation topic, then explain briefly, especially regarding the research carried out.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Cultural Studies research is interdisciplinary, anti-theoretical, and anti-methodological. However, this does not mean that theory and methodology are not used. In fact, Cultural Studies is closely tied to certain theories and methods depending on the needs of the researcher. These theories and methodologies are used as a perspective and frame of reference to analyze and explore the core issues of this research. So, this type of research is not tied to a particular scientific discipline, so the theory and research methods depend on the research objectives themselves.

Cultural Studies is a critical study, namely defending the weak and oppressed. The basis is that when there is a relationship between several parties, there is always a power relationship. This form of power is not only about government policy towards the small people, but when there is an imbalance in position, and there are parties who are disadvantaged, then Cultural Studies can be used to examine this problem. In this research, the author wants to find out the impact of a culture that is currently being widely discussed, namely flexing culture (show off culture). According to Veblen (1899), flex culture is the activity of showing off luxury goods or activities with the aim of seeking validation from other people. The author wants to research how flexing culture on social media influences self-representation and ways of thinking, especially in terms of socializing with Generation Z, which is the age group that most often accesses the internet.

As technology advances and globalization in Indonesia, social media is easily and massively accessed by every generation. One social media that is often used is Instagram. This type of social media offers each user the freedom to create and upload any type of content if they comply with existing regulations. From a cultural studies perspective, social media shows a concept where a social media user is subject to a trend and consistently follows that trend without paying attention to the impact on themselves and others. One of the trends studied in this research is the flexing trend.

This research comes from the author's curiosity about the reasons for the rise of flexing culture on social media, especially if this type of content is carried out by users from generation Z. At this age, the author assumes that they are not yet at the age of owning super luxury goods or can travel to places with fantastic fare. However, it is not impossible for them to become influential people on social media or what are usually referred to as Instagram celebrities. Currently, there are not many Indonesian gen z *celebgrams*, unlike millennial gen *celebgrams* who have already tasted the digital world. Apart from that, the author also started from a case of fraud committed by young Instagram users named Doni Salmanan and Indra Kenz. On Doni Salmanan's YouTube channel, his lifestyle is packaged very luxuriously. This 24-year-old man's lifestyle makes us think how a young man can make billions in just a matter of months. After investigating, an investigation was carried out and it turned out that Doni Salmanan had committed a crime. His wealth turned out to be obtained from deceiving people who were influenced by him. He is the sole suspect in a case of fraud under the guise of investment on the Quotex platform.

The next figure is Indra Kenz, an affiliate trading teacher who is nicknamed crazy rich Medan. He caused a stir in cyberspace because he often showed off his luxury goods and wealth. Indra Kenz also said he was the only 25 year old young man who could afford a watch worth IDR 7 billion. Many artists create content with him to increase popularity, and Indra Kenz's identical slogan is "Wow, it's really cheap." However, like Doni Salmanan, Indra was proven to have committed a criminal act. He is involved in online

gambling, fraud, and spreading fake news through his personal social media. Many of the cars he owned were confiscated by the police, and all the money he had was also confiscated. Now he is in prison for 15 years and he regrets what he did.

The two cases above are the newest and most widely reviewed cases of flexing that have led to crime, both in cyberspace and in the real world. There are many other flexing practices on social media which often result in crimes and are carried out by relatively young users. This sparked the author's curiosity about the relationship between flexing culture and generation Z on social media.

Another young person who uses flexing as content on Instagram is: Julio Halim, an Instagram user from Jakarta who has been successful in the world of exports, even though he doesn't own a factory. Not only is he successful in the world of exports, but Julio Halim is also worthy of being an inspiration because he encourages young people to become entrepreneurs by establishing a community called Bisa Export. Through the Bisa Export community, Julio Halim accommodates anyone who wants to be successful in the export business or develop their business by exporting, whatever the type of business and product. On his Instagram page, @julioekspor, this young man born in 2003 also posted several photos with luxury cars.

The three young people above are examples of flexing being used and made into a spectacle on social media, especially Instagram. This is what the researchers want to examine, namely how they position themselves and represent themselves among Instagram users by showing off. This phenomenon was then used as the subject of research and study.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is Systematic Literature Review (SLR), which identifies, evaluates, and interprets research findings related to certain research questions, topics, or concerns (Kitchenham, 2004). The qualitative approach in systematic reviews, on the other hand, serves to summarize the results of qualitative research with a descriptive nature. The systematic literature review carried out in this research is based on the stages presented by Francis & Baldesari. The following are the stages of this research:

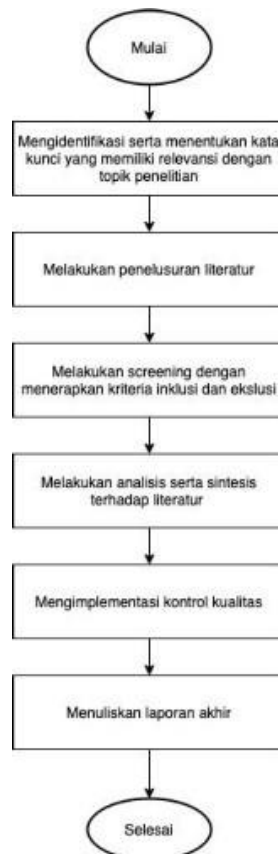


Figure 1. Research Stages

1. Identify and find keywords.

The aim of this research is to examine flexing culture/show-off culture in Indonesia, the impact of flexing culture on Indonesian social media users aged Generation Z, and the reasons why flexing culture thrives on Indonesian social media. Therefore, researchers set several conditions before conducting a literature search, namely:

- 1) Requirement 1 - The birth of the concept of a culture of showing off on social media in literature.
- 2) Requirement 2 - Creation of ideas related to social media as a place for cultural exhibition.
- 3) Requirement 3 – Intensity of social media use by Indonesian Generation Z. At this stage, the researcher determines keywords to conduct a literature search, namely. Flexing culture and social media.

2. Literature Search

Literature searches were carried out with the help of the Digital Reference Guard (GARUDA) page <https://garuda.kemdikbud.go.id/> and Google Scholar. This research combed through several national journals related to the topics studied on the GARUDA page. Meanwhile, international journals were found via the Google Scholar page. In a short search, the literature search resulted in the discovery of 10 journals, including 8 national journals and 2 international journals. The ten journals are summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Journals Summarized

No.	Title	Year	Author	Publisher
1	Social Climber dan Budaya Pamer: Paradoks Gaya Hidup Masyarakat Kontemporer	2017	Mahyudin	Jurnal Kajian Islam Interdisipliner, Vol. 2 No. 2
2	Social Media Influences to Teenagers	2019	1. Dr. Cherry Nunez-Rola 2. Dr. Nina Jen Ruta-Canayong	International Journal of Research Science & Management
3	Social Media is Not Real: The Effect of ‘Instagram vs Reality’ Images on Women’s Social Comparison and Body Image.	2019	1. Marika Tiggemann 2. Isabillea Anderberg	SAGE Journals, Vo. 2, Issue 12
4	Fenomena Flexing di Media Sosial dalam Aspek Hukum Pidana	2022	Jawade Hafidz	Jurnal Cakrawala Informasi, Vol. 2 No. 1
5	Analisis Isi Pesan Flexing pada Tayangan Program Sobat Misqueen Trans 7 Episode Grebek Rumah Sultan Muda Meda Indra Kenz	2022	1. Rachmawati Windyaningrum 2. Ayudia Nurullita 3. Hasan Abdul Aziz 4. Ramadhan Nurfaizy	Indonesia Journal of Social and Education, Vol 1 Issue 1 Year 2022 Pages 8-17
6	Fenomena Flexing di Media Sosial Sebagai Ajang Pengakuan Kelas Sosial Dengan Kajian Teori Fungsionalisme Struktural	2022	1. Nur Khayati 2. Dinda Apriliyanti 3. Victoria Nastacia Sudiana 4. Aji Setiawan 5. Didi Pramono	Jurnal Sosialisasi, Vol. 9, Nomor 2, Juli 2022

7	Dampak Stimulus-Respon Konsumen Terhadap Maraknya Gaya Visual Iklan Flexing Produk Binomo Budi Setiawan.	2022	1. Edy Chandra 2. Maltri Widya Mutiara	Seri Seminar Nasional ke-IV Universitas Tarumanegara Tahun 2022 (SERINA IV UNTAR 2022)
8	Flexing in the Lens of Christian Education: Children's Failure to Stem the Negative Influence of the Era of Disruption or Neglect of Parents Instilling Early Childhood Character	2022	1. Ronny Simatupang 2. Maria Widiastuti 3. Sandy Ariawan 4. Tiur Imeldawati	KURIOS (Jurnal Teolog dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen), Vol. 8 No. 1
9	Studi Flexing dalam Pandangan Hadis dengan Metode Tematik dan Analisis Etika Media Sosial	2022	Wahyudin Darmalaksana	Gunung Djati Conference Series, Vol. 8
10	Perspektif Etika Hindu Terhadap Perilaku Flexing Pada Pengguna Instagram	2022	1. Ni Putu Ayu Budiartini 2. Srirahayu Puspa wati John Abraham Ziswan 3. Suryomunar	SANJIWANI (Jurnal Filsafat)

Based on the journal collection that has been carried out, the relationship between social media and flexing produces links with contemporary users, lifestyle, image, education, law, entertainment, and even religion. Then the researcher quickly read all the journals and filtered the literature based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria in the table below. From the screening process, researchers obtained three selected literatures consisting of two international journals and one national journal as primary data and supported by secondary data from books, journals and other articles that were relevant to the topic.

Table 2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Journal studies that use large and small scale data
	A study that discusses the phenomenon of showing off culture that occurs on social media
	Journals that use teenage subjects as sources of data studied
Exclusion Criteria	A study that examines the culture of showing off from a religious and legal perspective

3. Analysis and Synthesis Process

Literature that meets the criteria will be abstracted and synthesized according to the research topic so that a classification of the role of social media can be formed as a place for cultural displays watched by several social media users aged Generation Z. Of the 10 journals mentioned above, researchers only studied three journals. related to flexing culture, social media, and teenagers (Generation Z), namely:

1. Social Climber and Show-Off Culture: The Paradox of Contemporary Society's Lifestyle, by Mahyudin. Furthermore, this journal will be named Journal 1.
2. Social Media Influences to Teenagers, by Dr. Cherry Nunez-Rola and Dr. Nina Jen Ruta-Canayong. Furthermore, this journal will be named Journal 2.

3. Social Media is Not Real: The Effect of 'Instagram vs Reality' Images on Women's Social Comparison and Body Image, by Marika Tiggemann and Isablea Anderberg. Furthermore, this journal will be named Journal 3.

Final report

The final report is intended to provide a complete picture of the results of the analysis and synthesis of the literature that has been included in the inclusion and exclusion criteria. This step will be carried out in the results and discussion section.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research objective of Journal 1 is to describe social behavior represented in social media texts (virtual and images) as elements of social events and meaning reproduction that have causal effects, such as: changes in knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and values in cyber society. This article attempts to examine the problems and phenomena of unique patterns of contemporary lifestyle behavior in all its dynamics. The author explains the forms of social phenomena influenced by consumer culture, such as the emergence of social climbers and the spread of exhibitionist societies, which are clearly visible in modern life as a result of individual worship and infatuation with the meaning of consuming signs and/or symbols in social life.

Journal 2 discursively analyzes the influence of social media on teenagers. The themes and language of social media content as well as the influence of behavior on social media awareness are specifically analyzed. Findings reveal that social media content depicts human weaknesses, while internet slang mobilizes the contextual language of social media and that adolescents' use of social media critically influences internet dependency, disrupts sleep patterns, communication preferences, language acquisition, academic effort, task performance, and needs. will live a healthy life.

Journal 3 examines the opinions of cyberspace people regarding one of the recent trends on Instagram, namely 'Instagram vs reality'. This trend contains two photos side by side of a woman. One photo with an ideal depiction and the other a more natural/real depiction of what it is. This study aims to experimentally investigate the influence of these images on body image. As predicted, viewing 'Instagram vs reality' creates body dissatisfaction relative to ideal images. Additionally, the detrimental effects of appearance comparison were much less marked for 'Instagram vs reality' and real images than ideal images. It concluded that 'Instagram vs reality' and real-life posts have the potential to improve women's body satisfaction, but more research is needed to assess the long-term impact.

The three journals above discuss the impact that social media has on cyber society. In Journal 1, it was explained that social media can influence a cyberspace citizen to become a social climber. Journal 2, social media is able to shape the lifestyle of cyberspace people, including teenagers. Journal 3 examines how mass media users, especially women, respond to what is real (the appearance of a woman without make-up) and what is considered fake (using make-up). The author of this paper is interested in this topic. Topics on the impact of social media on its users.

So what aspects are studied in the three journals? The author of Journal 1 collected images in the form of photographs as a representation of social behavior as well as real life social practices displayed by individuals in the realm of social life and cyberspace. The author explores this behavior not only based on experience in navigating daily social life, but also sees the rapid development of this behavior in the realm of social media such as Facebook and Instagram and other media. The author examines their activities that we witness all the time in the scope of everyday life and then develops the polar relationship of meaning behind them.

In Journal 2, researchers investigated the influence of social media messages on the behavior of Visayas State University students. Focuses on 1) analyzing message content in terms of themes and language; and 2) the influence of social media behavior. Participants in Journal 3 were 305 women aged between 18 and 30 years, which is considered the largest demographic group of Instagram users. They were recruited using the crowdsourcing platform TurkPrime, which uses aggregated data online via Mechanical Turk (MTurk). The sample had a mean age of 25–34 years (standard deviation (SD) = 2.98), and their mean body mass index (BMI) was 26.98 (SD = 7.59), indicating a slightly overweight sample. weight. The majority of participants identified as Caucasian (69.2%), followed by Latino/Hispanic (11.8%), African American (10.2%), Asian (6.6%), Native American (0.3%) and 'other' (2.0%). Most participants had completed a bachelor's degree (55.4%) or were current students (23.6%).

These three journals use the same theory. He explained that there are many stories, experiences and information that can be gathered from current societal phenomena. Jean Baudrillard belongs to a group of postmodern social theorists who focus their attention on the analysis of contemporary society, where according to him consumption is no longer controlled by production, but by mass media, cybernetic models,

information processing, social media, entertainment and information industries. Baudrillard tries to describe the postmodern world as one shaped by simulation: we live in an age of "simulation" where the repetition of objects or events has dissolved the distinction between signs and reality, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish what is real and what simulates reality. During this time, lifestyle with all kinds of symbols has become a necessity, where consumption is no longer interpreted as simply trading cultural goods but has become a social stage. In it, social meanings are contested, and there is even a war of position between members of the society involved. In other words, a developing consumer culture is an arena where consumer goods become a tool for the formation of personality, image and social status.

These studies use a qualitative paradigm and phenomenological approach. In accordance with the current phenomenon of society wanting to present itself in the social media space as an interactive social activity, this behavior is analyzed by modifying Jean Baudrillard's consumer culture theory. In Journal 2, the author used a survey conducted face to face. The survey questionnaire was adapted because the questions were adjusted to directly provide data that was accurate enough to match what was needed in the research. All collected data is calculated in tables for comprehensive presentation and discussion.

Meanwhile, Journal 3 used a randomized between-subjects experimental design to investigate the effect of Instagram image type (ideal, real, 'Instagram vs reality') on body dissatisfaction and body appreciation (controlling for baseline scores). Relationships with state performance comparisons were also examined across conditions. The authors used Qualtrics software to randomly allocate participants to one of three experimental conditions (ideal, real, paired) in which they viewed 15 Instagram images.

Each journal has a style for how it carries out its research. However, it cannot be denied that researchers still have to use tools such as other applications to collect data, especially in Journal 3, which uses Qualtrics software. The patterns of consumption behavior described in Journal 1 are a series of social behaviors exhibited by society today. In this era, symbolic exchange is an important and unavoidable part where in this postmodern universe, images and markers are always reproduced as strategies for actualizing self-status by each individual in navigating various worlds of reality, including the world of lifestyle. Because with this object, a person becomes different or the same as others, and at the same time this object connects him to the social order in which he is located even though the signs consumed do not always correspond to actual reality. All of this has hit some societies today where the development of cultural consumption has been able to control the minds of the public without them realizing it. So in reality, as a rational human being, the desire to consume is something that needs to be controlled. In this way, wants and needs will be placed in ideal proportions rationally in every act of our consumption.

In Journal 2, from the data collected, it is known that the top three most frequently selected content on social media are jokes in the form of memes, trending videos and jokes. To produce a thematic and linguistic analysis of this material, five samples of each type were studied. It was concluded that social media encouraged the formation of participant behavior. Social media content depicts human weaknesses while internet slang mobilizes the contextual language of social media. Adolescents' use of social media critically influences internet addiction, sleep patterns, communication preferences, language acquisition, academic effort, task performance, and need for immediacy.

Meanwhile, in Journal 3, researchers sought to expose the fakeness of social media and thereby prevent women from comparing themselves to idealistic and unrealistic images. While a small number of experimental studies have shown that viewing more realistic photos on Instagram has the positive benefit of causing fewer appearance problems than viewing photos that have been enhanced or edited. This study aims to expand existing literature by investigating the impact of viewing such 'Instagram vs reality' images on women's body image.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This research discusses research on the topic of social media. This media is often used as a container for flexing. Flexing culture is a culture of showing off wealth. Researchers are looking for a number of studies related to how social media has an impact on its users. It turns out, from the three journals described above, social media can influence several levels of cyber society, one of which is teenagers. Social media is able to shape the character of a teenager who uses social media and fosters a sense of dependence (based on Journal 2). On the other hand, social media is also used as a social climbing tool.

Social climbing is a situation where an individual does various things to raise his or her social status, in this case using social media. Journal 1 details several possibilities for social climbing. Journals 2 and 3 also provide the same results that social media can influence the social status of a virtual world user.

Achieving effective results using Systematic Literature Review requires a high level of skills in source identification and analysis to obtain accurate and relevant information in compiling summaries, which requires a lot of time and critical thinking in analyzing research results. Another limitation of research using

the systematic literature review method is the limited information collected from the literature, because the researcher did not get the right information about the topic under study.

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