

# MANAGEMENT OF INFLUENCER EXPRESSION REGARDING VACCINATION COMMUNICATION ON INSTAGRAM

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## Abstract

Middle January 2021, the death toll related to the Covid-19 pandemic reached 2 million people, and nearly 26 thousand people were recorded in Indonesia. The struggle of the Indonesian government to reduce the number of victims of COVID-19 by bringing the Sinovac vaccine and vaccinations to the community. Pros and cons occur in response to the covid-19 Vaccination with this Sinovac vaccine. The government's public communication strategy through influencers with many followers on Instagram is an option. The election of Instagram as social media for vaccination communication is because Instagram is the most up-to-date social media, and it is easy to provide understanding because it involves information in the form of visuals and text to the public. In carrying out vaccination communications, these influencers create messages or information that are organic or organic. Amplified Word of Mouth so that vaccination communication can reach the community simultaneously. The subjects studied in this study were influencer accounts (@arielnoah and @dr. Tirta) which were selected by purposive sampling with qualitative research using the literature review method. The results showed that the influencers in each post on vaccination communication activities in the form of distributing content and information in the feed room, likes, and giving comments showed that vaccination communication activities carried out identity politics. Influencers on Instagram understand health and responsibility. The results of this study provide an overview of how influencers on their Instagram carry out impression management to convince the public that vaccines are safe and try to refer to the government's public campaign regarding covid-19 Vaccination.

**Key words:** Influencers, Vaccination Communication, Instagram

## Introduction

On March 2, 2020, President Jokowi and his staff announced the first positive case of COVID-19 in Indonesia. It was stated that two Indonesian citizens were infected with the Coronavirus, namely a mother (64) and a child (31) in Depok, West Java. Reportedly, they contracted COVID-19 from a Japanese citizen who had visited Indonesia in February 2020. It only took 38 days for Covid-19 to infect all provinces in Indonesia on April 9, 2020[1]. When will the Covid-19 pandemic end? This is a question that hangs and wants to be answered immediately. The need for a vaccine to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic is urgently needed to answer the question of when the Covid-19 pandemic will occur in Indonesia. The vaccine is expected to help reduce the transmission rate of a new type of Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, the cause of Covid-19. The number of people who are infected with Covid-19 is still increasing. Sinovac COVID-19 Vaccine is the first vaccine to be imported by the Government of Indonesia. Although, the government, through the Ministry of Health, has a setsixCOVID-19 vaccine to be used in Indonesia. This determination is contained in the Decree of the Minister of Health Number 9860 of 2020[2].

The long journey has shown for the covid-19 vaccination program in Indonesia in preparing the vaccination program to be implemented throughout Indonesia. The

Vaccination is expected to take place starting on January 13, 2021. Minister of Health Budi Gunadi said the Vaccination would be carried out after issuing an Emergency Use Authorization by the Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOM). Vaccine deliveries are carried out in stages, starting on January 3, and are targeted for completion on January 7, 2021. President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) said that the vaccine would be returned for the vaccination program's implementation. Jokowi explained that the government had ordered 329.5 million doses of the Covid-19 vaccine to implement the national vaccination program. The vaccine consists of [3]. On 9-30 September 2020, the Ministry of Health and Unicef and WHO held an online survey on Public Perceptions of the Covid-19 Vaccine in Indonesia. With a total of 112,888 respondents, the survey results show that nationally, 64.8% of Indonesians can receive the Covid-19 Vaccination, while 7.6% refuse and 27.6% say they do not know. From the group of Indonesian people who have not been able to receive the Covid-19 Vaccination, they reasoned that they were not sure about the safety of the vaccine; as much as 30% were not sure about its effectiveness as much as 22% did not believe in vaccines as much as 13%, were afraid of the side effects, such as fever and pain as much as 12 %, the reason for religious belief is 8% and (6) other reasons are 15%. One more fact generated by the survey is that only 65% of the people of West Papua are aware of information related to the Covid-19 vaccine. This percentage is lower than Papua Province at 70% but higher than Aceh Province at 61%[4]. The phenomenon of the rejection of the Covid-19 vaccination case that will be carried out began with DPR health commission member Ribka Tjibtaning Politician from the PDIP Faction. Rebekah took issue with the clinical trial of the Sinovac corona vaccine; according to her, the import was carried out before the clinical trial of the Sinovac corona vaccine was completed. The province in West Sumatra has a relatively high rate of vaccine rejection. The effect of this character made the anti-vaccine resistance stronger, which gave rise to the hashtag #TolakDivaksinSinovac which appeared on Twitter because it was tweeted tens of thousands of times. Furthermore, the governments of the two provinces with the lowest rates of receiving the Covid-19 vaccine, namely Aceh and West Sumatra, will not require this Vaccination or impose penalties on people who refuse this program. The phenomenon in these two areas is refusing vaccines mainly because of side effects on health and its hollowness. Aceh and West Sumatra are the provinces with the most significant number of vaccine refusals. Willingness to receive the Covid-19 vaccine in Aceh is only 46%, while in West Sumatra, it is 47. The refusal of Vaccination has occurred in Indonesia before, and such as during the National Immunization Week (PIN) March 8-15, 2016, not everything went smoothly. The officers only managed to give vaccines to 9 children under five from a target of 139. In the district of Harjamukti, Cirebon, West Java, there was a rejection because there was an assumption that the vaccine contained haram ingredients.[5].

Some negative sentiments on social media were also investigated by Katrina Feb, who revealed that there were also many rejections on social media regarding Measles-Rubella vaccination in Indonesia. Her research presented data that social media such as Twitter can be used to create negative views or sentiments in the community towards the vaccination program.[6]. The Indonesian government is also to provide socialization for the COVID-19 vaccine by issuing technical instructions for the implementation of vaccinations for the prevention of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Decree of the Director-General of Disease Prevention and Control of the Indonesian Ministry of Health No. HK. 02.02/4/1/2012. This decision letter considers the findings related to the behavior of seeking information on vaccines. Respondents mostly choose information sources are health workers (57%) and family members (32%). The preferred media choices are social

media (54%), print/electronic media such as TV/newspapers (22%), and telecommunication channels (SMS/telephone) (13%) [7]. The poor respondent groups prefer searching for information through social media; it tends to decrease with increasing economic status. In contrast, the use of print and electronic media is more in the upper-class society and decreases as the economic level declines. The Ministry has also detailed the information dissemination pattern of Health of the Republic of Indonesia.



Figure 14. Objectives, Strategies, Messages, and Communication Channels for COVID-19 Vaccination (source: Decree of the Director-General of Disease Prevention and Control of the Indonesian Ministry of Health)

The target community for Vaccination is reached using influencers as a program carried out by the Indonesian Ministry of Health. The use of influencers is why social media gives birth to influential influencers in digitally disseminating information and messages. Influencers are considered capable of impacting their followers through uploading photos and electronic word of mouth (E WOM) that they convey on their social media.[8]. Instagram social media is the media most often used by influencers because on Instagram social media, and influencers can directly interact with their followers through likes or comments, commonly known as mass-self communication.[9]. Instagram was born in 2010 as a mobile application that can be accessed via mobile or web. Globally, 77% of consumers will take action after receiving support or recommendations from family, friends, or online user reviews, an increase compared to traditional television and magazine advertisements in the 2000s[10]. Instagram gives birth to influencers, considered capable of influencing their followers. An influencer is an activist, well-connected, impactful, active-minded, and trendsetter for his followers.[11]. Influencers create content that they want to create themselves, commonly known as User Generated Content. In this case, the choice of photos and words is vital because this is where the influencer wants to convey the actual message. Influencers as communicators want to convey messages in the form of photos and exciting captions so that their followers can accept the message, in this case, being a communicant. Influencers have a significant role in marketing a product because they are considered credible in conveying a message about a product. The existence of influencers is essential in the disclosure of information during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because an influencer is someone who influences spreading information and experiences persuasively[12]. Brittani Hennessy's research in her book Influencers states that a person will become an influencer when he builds a reputation and self-image on social media based on his knowledge and expertise on a particular topic.[8]. The covid 19 vaccination was a bit of a blunder when using an artist as a covid-19

vaccination influencer like Raffi Ahmad because the use of celebrities with many followers was seen gathering at an event with his colleagues without implementing health protocols after a few hours of being vaccinated. This action made the public hesitate, and several parties protested what Raffi Ahmad had done [8]. Influencers must also have knowledge and expertise on the topics discussed, even though they do not have to be experts. This knowledge allows an influencer to explore a product in detail and depth so that the review becomes more honest and open. This study provides an overview of Influencer expression management in the COVID-19 vaccination socialization activity.

The paradigm in this research is the constructivist paradigm. The constructivist paradigm views communication science as a systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through direct and detailed observation of the social actors concerned in creating and maintaining their social world.[13]. Through this paradigm, the author attempts to analyze the impression built by Instagram users about the existence of Pancasila. This study uses a qualitative approach with virtual ethnography as a research study. Virtual ethnography is a method used to investigate phenomena in internet interactions and explore users on the internet when they are communicating with the internet. Virtual ethnography reflects the implications of mediated communication on the internet [14]. The study tries to disassemble influencers' persuasion of covid-19 Vaccination from photos uploaded by their personal Instagram account owners. Researchers collect data. Influencers selected in this study are dr. Tirta and Ariel Noah interpret their uploads related to information about Covid 19 at the beginning of Covid 19 starting to become a pandemic, namely from March 2020 to March 2021. The selection of these influencer accounts is purposive sampling because the account has many followers, which means that influencers have much influence. Impression Management Theory One form individuals often use to gain influence is Impression management. Impression management or often called impression management (Kreitner & Kinichi: 2005), is defined as a process by which a person attempts to control or manipulate the reactions of others to their self-image. Manipulation can take the form of conveying ideas. Impression management can be done by changing the way he dresses, obeying the norms and regulations in the place where he is, taking names for other people's work, the way he talks, the way he walks, and so on. All of this is done with the hope that someone will be influenced by the person he is addressing. Humans are actors who seek to impart personal characteristics and goals to others through "showing their drama." In achieving this goal, Instagram social media users, in this case, will develop behaviors that support this role. Like a drama show, a life drama actor must also prepare for the show's completion. This completeness includes taking into account settings such as the location of the photos he posts, costumes or clothes used by Instagram account users when posting their photos with the framing "I am Ready for the Covid-19 Vaccine", the use of words in their Instagram status or the dialogue that occurs in the comment's column, as well as other non-verbal actions such as choosing a non-verbal language. This, of course, aims to leave a good impression on the interaction opponent and pave the way to achieve the goal. Goffman revealed that the above actions are called "impression management." According to Goffman, [15]. Other people judge based on the instructions the person gives, and from that judgment, they treat the person himself. They do not get exceptional services if they judge a person with low status. If the person is considered stupid, they will set the personal. For that, the person deliberately presents himself or (self-presentation) as he wants.

## Result and Discussion

The influencers chosen in this study are dr. Tirta and Ariel Noah because as influencers have a lot of followers or followers on Instagram and have influenced their followers to do something because Influencers can be 'critical actors'[16]. Ariel Noah's Instagram with the name @arielnoah has a blue tick in the sense that this is an original account or, say, an account that has been verified for authenticity by Instagram. In his bio, Ariel provides a quote to greet his followers, "The Day of Spirited Energies, The Week of the Literalist, The Month of the Regulator. - I Feel, I Create, I Serve -". Ariel started a post about her support for the fight against covid-19 on her Instagram on March 30, 2020.



Figure 15. Instagram @arielnoah is informing <https://www.covid19.go.id/> for more info.

The post regarding this information has been liked by 108,711 followers, which means it has been enjoyed visually by @arielnoah's followers—followed by on February 1, 2021, showing @arielnoah supporting the covid-19 vaccination activity by making a teaser about him supporting the Vaccination. @arielnoah's seriousness in building his self-image for his support for the covid-19 Vaccination can be seen in the choice of words used in the teaser he made. "I am sure everyone wants a life as usual, back to activities, chatting. This is not about protecting myself, the covid 19 vaccine is in my body", the snippet of the narrative in this covid-19 influencer teaser, and this post received many responses from his followers, even some of them from celebrity friends too. Like Clara Bernadeth, Ariel, as a celebrity, asserts that she is a covid-19 vaccination influencer, reluctant to exaggerate the information she gets while participating in the Covid-19 Vaccination. Expression management is built by showing that Ariel Noah prefers to tell the truth about his experiences. The fact that he was injected with the covid-19 vaccine is also told in the post.

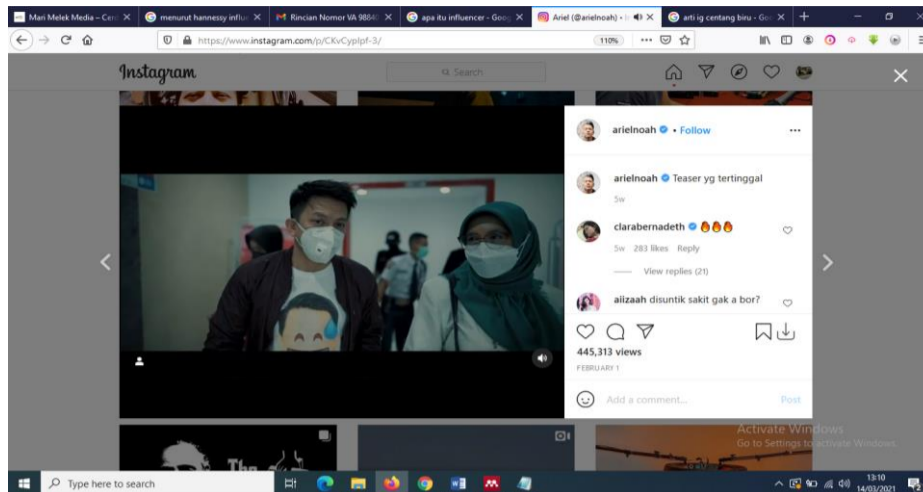


Figure 16. Instagram @arielnoah as a covid-19 vaccine influencer

After that post, he also confirmed by posting that he already had a covid-19 vaccine that protected his body from the contagion of COVID-19.

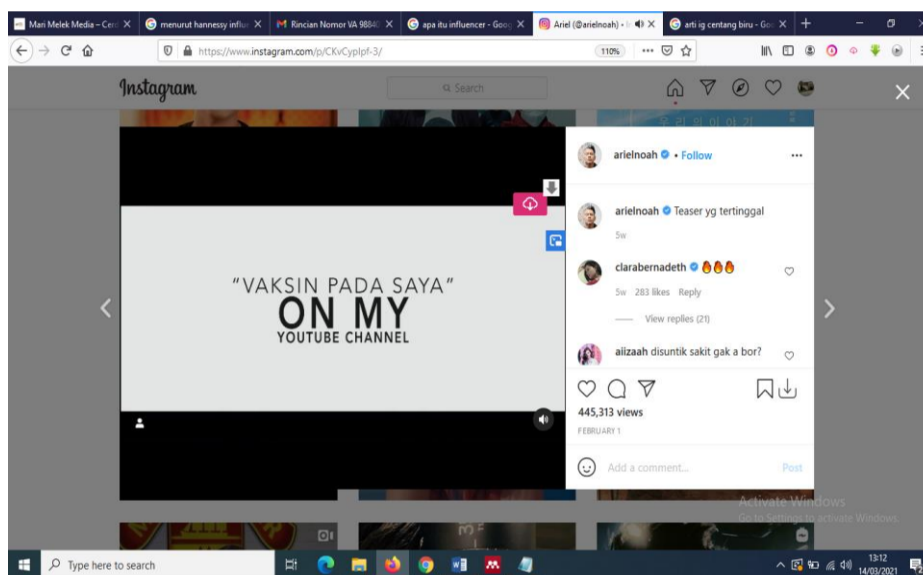


Figure 17. Instagram @arielnoah with the post of the covid-19 vaccine on his body.

@arielnoah avoids negative words and makes appropriate posts and photos to attract his followers' attention. @arielnoah shares interesting photos with good quality and captions containing positive personal experiences, as well as being practical and inspiring for his followers. @arielnoah's honest review when describing the advantages and disadvantages of the covid-19 vaccine makes influencers able to build networks on social media. Ariel asked what kind of vaccine was received and all kinds of side effects. The material Ariel conveyed in social media accounts encouraged them not to lie about the covid-19 that Ariel experienced. In the socialization of the covid-19 vaccine, @arielnoah is defined as a party that can influence the decisions of its followers. Through social media, interaction and trust are built between influencers and their followers so that @arielnoah's statement is considered more credible than the socialization displayed by the government. Even what testimony is on Instagram @arielnoah is further developed on Ariel Noah's YouTube with the nameaccount@Ariel Noah. On the youtube account, the material presented regarding Covid 19 information is more precise because the duration of Youtube content in the form of films can have long duration. YouTube amplifies Ariel's Instagram information. Influencers use the social media space to inform their followers. Trust in influencers even exceeds trust in experts.

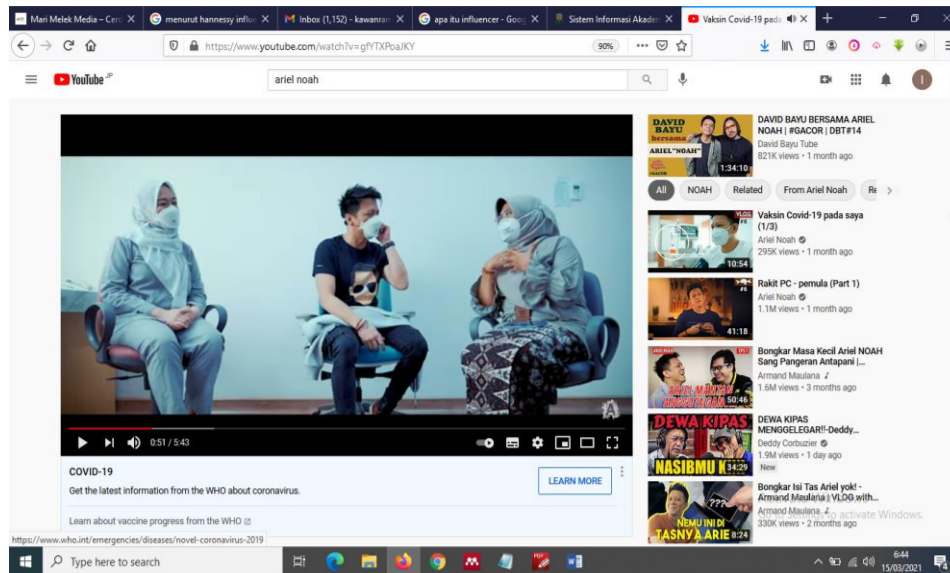


Figure 18. Youtube @ariel Noah with a discussion post about the Covid-19 vaccine.

The contents about covid-19 on @Ariel Noah's youtube are divided into three episodes with the theme "Covid-19 vaccine for me". The youtube material contains how Ariel Noah tells the story of Ariel and the Sinovac vaccine and how Ariel decided on the covid-19 vaccine he received. In this case, Youtube provides evidence of another strength of Youtube, namely its long duration, so influencers need to have other social media that can help their account on Instagram. Instagram has strength in artistic photos, while like YouTube has audio-visual power.



Figure 19. Ariel maintains that the Health Protocol is working to prevent the Covid-19 vaccine.

In posting February 3, 2021, Ariel, in her activities of creating musical works, emphasizes the importance of maintaining health protocols by showing that she uses a mask when doing activities with her band mates.

Ariel Noah's posts can influence perceptions and preferences in his social media environment. Influencers like Ariel Noah can be interpreted as someone who can change the way people think and act. These changes can occur in every aspect of a person's life. Not only do changes commercial in nature, but they can also impact other aspects, such as ideology. Influencers can not only be used as a marketing tool. More than that, influencers are also social relationship assets that can be invited to collaborate to achieve specific goals, such as the covid-19 vaccine activity. Influencers can be divided into specific types of categories. The most commonly used categories will usually refer to the number of followers, the type of content served, and the level of influence. Influencers can also be grouped into four groups: Mega-Influencers, Macro-Influencers, Micro-Influencers, and Nano Influencers. Based on their content, influencers are grouped as Bloggers, Youtubers, Social Posts Only, and recently more prevalent, Podcasters.

Meanwhile, when it comes to the level of influence, there are three types of influencers, namely Celebrities, Reputation/Chromo Influencers, and Key Opinion Leaders (KOL), such as journalists, academics, and experts. Like Ariel Noah, she falls into the celebrity category. Social Posts Only, and recently growing popularity has been Podcasters.

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Dr. Tirta is an influencer who provides an understanding of covid-19 Vaccination through his Instagram with the name @dr.tirta. In his account, Dr.Tirta calls himself an entrepreneur and shoe seller. The post regarding dr. Tirta's covid vaccine was posted on January 28, 2021.

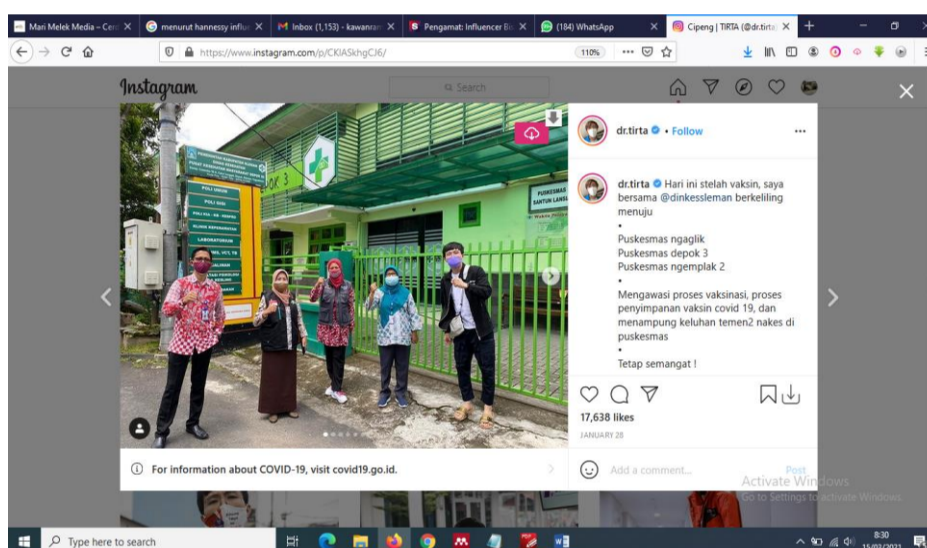


Figure 20. Instagram @dr.Tirta with posts about the Covid-19 vaccine.

The @dr.tirta account provides education about the covid-19 vaccine in its way. Dr. Tirta built expression management by giving his observations and detailed evaluations of how he uses the covid-19 vaccine. The delivery method tends to be straightforward and accurate because the @dr.tirta account is owned by a doctor responsible for his profession. When invited by the government as influencers to help promote policies or programs to the public, some influencers turn into propaganda tools for the government itself. Dr shuns this phenomenon. Tirta, so that he often fills his Instagram content with words that are loud enough to provide persuasion or information to his followers. Dr. Tirta often calls out in his content that he will simplify the message of a policy or program so that it is easy for his followers to understand who part of the community is. The shift of influencers to new propaganda tools to create a positive public perception according to the government's version often distances itself from reality. Propaganda such as diverting the performance measure of handling the pandemic according to objective measures on the government's socio-economic and medical dimensions tends to be misleading in distributing information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine in a particular profile. Dr.Tirta became a reference for his social media followers and the general public because dr.Tirta is considered to have the same fate as the people



currently experiencing turmoil, so what was revealed and appointed by dr. Tirta has become a foothold for her followers, as seen from the comments on her Instagram feed. "The same fate (the same fate) among people who are currently experiencing turmoil Congratulations, doc, hope you are always healthy, giving a lot of health information to all, opening up horizons, what must be done, input, about this pandemic, to the common people, the street vendors, hawkers, with simple and easy to understand things, to continue to be given counseling, which is good and right, not affected by misleading things 🙏 🙏 " from the account @ addanursyirwan. There is also @sitisibuea, "Doc, do not forget to stop by the Rusunawa covid shelter, MBR DIY Gemawang, doc... Waiting for the volunteers at the dock shelter 🙏 😊". Influencers, however, have a substantial humanitarian responsibility; the fate of society is also the fate of the influencers' future. In the end, the existence of influencers will develop well if they also side with community groups. Through the involvement of these two accounts during the current COVID-19 pandemic, people seem to sympathize and readily accept the covid-19 Vaccination. The key to being a good influencer for the community is social generosity to serve humanity, which can be seen in these two accounts.

## Conclusion

The impression management built by Instagram social media users in carrying out Pancasila is carried out by displaying physical perfection, self-image, profession, and the identity of Pancasila nationalism. Young people more readily accept Pancasila through selfie photos on Instagram. The photos uploaded are certainly not arbitrary, but photos that show their strengths, starting from their self-image. Influencers create content that they want to create themselves, commonly known as User Generated Content. The choice of photos and words, in this case, is vital because this is where the actual message the influencer wants to convey. Influencers as communicators want to convey messages in the form of photos and exciting captions so that their followers can accept the message, in this case, a communicant. Influencers have a significant role in marketing a product because they are considered credible in conveying a message about a product. The author can conclude that basically everyone will do Impression Management according to what he wants to be displayed on the front stage, whether it is significantly inversely related to life backstage or there is only a slight difference with him backstage. The limitations of this research are only at the micro-level. In other words, the researcher only dismantled the impression management on Instagram users' photos displayed on Instagram social media.

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