Mind, Self, and Society in the Online Gay Community: Study on Grindr Apps

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ABSTRACT

Self-identity is a unified thing with someone's self-concept. The experience that is owned by someone is personal knowledge from experiencing and having various moments and references. The advancement of information technology in the Industry 4.0 era is now facing 5.0, opening up the opportunity to youths especially generation Z (Gen Z) who much more cares about freedom, having high self-confidence, and capability to quickly adopt various applications across internet media outlets. Nevertheless, they lack eagerness to dig deeper into something. Those factors have influenced the development of their self-concept through internet media. Grindr has known as an online gay-dating application, where a homosexual male exposes himself to what he wants to be seen by other users. This article focused on the review and describe how the self-concept development process of gen Z in using the application. Analyze the research using Mead's symbolic interactionism theory, furthermore to find out what factors that influence self-concept development of the application active users in their daily life. This research using virtual ethnography to four homosexual men in the age of 16-23. The results indicated that through the online application, a homosexual male is capable to develop his self-concept that wants to be seen on that medium. Moreover, the close read of data also uncovered at least ten types of aforesaid application users based on the self-concept that they form.

Keywords

Self-concept, homosexual, self-identity, symbolic interactionism, online dating

INTRODUCTION

Facing the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0 or also known as the era of disruption that marked by the advanced development of information technology, it is not easy to be implemented (Primawati, 2011). There are several obstacles to the development of Industry 4.0 in Indonesia.

McKinsey and Company Partner and Leader, Southeast Asia operations practice Vishal Agarwal conveyed there are 6 obstacles factors, namely difficulty in clearly designing the road map to grow on a large-scale; various data stored separately and the lack of a suitable platform for integration; the shortage of people with digital capabilities to run road maps that have been designed; challenges in finding and prioritizing pilot projects with clear business values; lack of knowledge and resources to develop projects and infrastructure; and

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concerns about cybersecurity risks (Situmorang, 2018).

On the other hand, the impact of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 must also be watched out, namely that many account users are not responsible for their acts. The Annual Conference of Communication, Media and Culture (ACCOMAC) II 2019 paid attention to the negative impact of social media, such as the circulation of many hoax news that can trigger religious conflicts as well as races, where Indonesia is easy to be triggered by conflicts, especially those related to the two things above (Wulandari, 2019).

Another effect is shifting the function of social media on pornoaction, pornography, LGBT target, online prostitution, and so on. Millennial age, the need for instant information means that it is easy to obtain only in the palm of a hand with a fraction of a second (Damhuri, 2019). The development of technology has an impact on the current generation.

This opportunity is used by the perpetrators as the right place for them, such as LGBT community who enlarge their followers, because a lot of LGBT content is spread, for example, Gay Muslim accounts on Instagram, with quite large followers and members. One of these phenomena is that technological advancements are also in line with the progress of information that opens opportunities for individuals to answer what they need, where the individual is difficult to express themselves in the real world, but in cyberspace feels that he found the right place.

One of them is the Grindr application, which is an application for homosexuals. Joel Simkhai was the founder to make this application on apps belonging to the Apple brand. He contacted Scandinavian Developer to create the Grindr app. The purpose of making this application was to find out who are gays in their neighborhood who use the application (Trebay, 2014).

Then, when he found out, it would be very easy to meet at a place that had been agreed by both parties. In the mentioned online media also explained that the founder of the application released Grindr only as "selfish desire". A desire to be able to meet more homosexual men. Simkhai in Utz (2016) stated "I immediately knew I wanted to use that to meet guys. I've already been thinking about easier ways to meet. When I was living in Manhattan I would wonder about the guys who lived around my block, or the guys in the bar I went to - how do I meet them? I wanted to do something with that, really focused on proximity and location."

This application is the virtual non-verbal communication of homosexuals, besides that this application also becomes a medium for gays to date online. Grindr, at its establishment was the first dating application exclusively for homosexuals, bisexuals, and bi-curious. Tom (2017) stated that Grindr is currently acquired by Beijing Kunlun Tech and has at least 27 million active users spread across nearly 200 countries in the world, one of which is Indonesia. The progress of information technology provides opportunities for users to make a platform following their needs.

The existence of this gay-dating online application makes it easy for homosexuals in Indonesia to communicate with each other, especially with its geotag technology making it easy to find each other nearby. Besides, the emergence of this application allows users to be themselves without having to pretend as someone else because of the social demands around them. However, unconsciously, by the time this application was shifted back to its original function when it was established in its home country, becoming an application that is filled with sexual transactions, whether it is just to have an income through online prostitution or only for the fulfillment of sexual needs. Furthermore, its development is very volatile and quickly judged to make its users very easy to engage in the practice of free sex, so Grindr is said to have contributed to the increment of the number of people with HIV in the world.

Shifting the function of this variety of social media causes a lot of things for its users. The application makes a person addictive or addicted (hyper-communication). Where users feel that the application is important for their daily lives. Dizik (2017) mentioned in several ways, the psychological impact caused by Facebook, Snapchat, and other digital platforms can be more difficult to treat than another known addiction according to Driskell is a therapist who treats patients due to social media opium. He stressed that "This addiction is worse than alcohol or drugs because it is more interesting and there is no stigma followed it". In other words, the ones who addictive to drugs or alcohol will get a negative stigma from society, while when it comes to social media do not get it at all. Former designer at Google, Tristan Harris, providing social media innovation as a big method to manipulate content to humans because the easiest way to apply the concept, or known as the concept of 'intermittent variable rewards', which is the easiest way to apply the concept above is imagine how gambling machines work (Morgans, 2018).

Then, the psychological aspect hijacked by social media platforms is a reciprocal element in social relations. This is means, if there is a message in a private social media account then we will be encouraged to immediately reply to it, here social media is exploiting by informing its users that someone has read the message we sent, and at the same time encouraging the recipient of the message to as quickly as possible reply to the message. So, in the end, this looping continues because the user will continue to check whether the message has been replied.

For those who use social media as a means of responding to their needs, they do not realize that the effects of the behavior that they have can also affect other users. Rakhmat (2018) argues that the public can filter the influence of mass media in changing human behavior. They are, as the audiences, no longer become the passive body that accepts whatever injects into them. Audiences filter information, through a process called selective exposure, and selective perception.

McQuail (2011) also believes that the more perfect the monopoly of mass communication, the more likely a change of opinion can be caused in the desired direction. In other words, here the audience is considered active in using the media to meet their needs, so it does not rule out the possibility that the behavior of the audience in his mindset and attitudes can change if constantly exposed by the mass media, from cognitive to conative. This is what can later influence in the process of forming one's self-concept. Calhoun and Acocella (1990) in the book Social Psychology (Me, We, and Us) explain the concept of self is a part of the self that influences every aspect of the experience, be it thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and individual behavior.

Meanwhile, Burns (1993) considers self-concept to be an individual's perceptions and evaluations about himself-including the picture others get of him and the description of the personality he wants and preserves from a personally evaluated environmental experience. Stuart and Sundeen (1991) mention that self-identity is a unity, in which self-awareness originating from observation and judgment is a synthesis of all aspects related to complete self-concept. The point is that self-identity is a component of self-concept that allows individuals to maintain a consistent stance because it allows a person to occupy a stable position in his environment.

However, on the contrary, if you have an unstable self-identity then this will also affect feeling worthless, the ability and self-mastery do not have value (negative), this is called the tendency of negative self-concept. Furthermore, self-concept is formed through a variety of experiences that he gained both from the moments he experienced directly, references from books, or other sources. Then, the experience is also gained from the interaction of a person with his environment. Thus, self-

concept is nothing but a person's perception of themselves that is psychological, social, physical, and intellectual that can affect one's behavior.

This Grindr phenomenon has the potential to become a medium in the process of developing one's self-concept. The Grindr application has formed a gay community that is no longer regional but international. This can be a frame of reference for someone whose level of identification with parents before and during adolescence is not good, then due to parenting that is applied too hard, the absence of a role model, and the level of personality in pre-adolescence that provides a foundation in overcoming identity, where sexual orientation also participates in the process. So, when curiosity has become a basic human nature, if stimulated by the contents presented from the application, it will affect the cognitive domain, so that it will arrive at the individual's perception where the perception is an experience of objects, events, or relationships are obtained by summarizing information and interpreting messages. The information obtained is the result of sensation.

The sensation is a function of the senses in receiving information from the environment because through these sensory tools humans can understand the physical quality of their environment. In other words, it is the sense tools that help humans gain knowledge and all the abilities to interact with their world. Thus, the correlation between sensation and perception is closely related to each other, sensation is part of perception. Generation Z or known as Gen Z has the characteristics of not reading the newspaper, not reading magazines, watching television less.

Nukman Luthfie, a social media expert sees the Gen Z is different from previous generations (Nasiri, 2016). If the gen Z from social media, to television, then search engines. In gen Z, they easily adopt trends in the world. Their existence in cyberspace itself is also diverse. Nukman Luthfie divided into two categories namely creator and conversationalist.

A creator is a person who creates certain content on blogs, websites, or YouTube accounts. Meanwhile, conversationalists are people who prefer to use Facebook, Twitter for conversation.

According to Nukman, gen Z is in the creator category because currently there is a lot of space that can be used for creativity, such as Instagram and TikTok. Widiyarti (2019) also conveyed the same thing that among their friends, gen Z prefers to talk in cyberspace through chat rather than talking face to face. Their courage to do online dating in cyberspace also even since the age of 16 years. Gen Z can learn self-taught or known as self-educator. However, negative things did not escape the learning process. The point is that they learn without filtering it by finding out in advance through valid sources, references, data, and so on.

Furthermore, what makes the difference between the gen Z with the previous generation is that Gen Z loves their freedom. The intended freedom is freedom of expression, create, express, and so on. Thus, the images mentioned by the exposure to information on the internet media that are presented are prone to influence their behavior (Syamsiah, 2017). This article explains the behavior characteristics of Generation Z using social media Grindr, especially for homosexual men, to shape their self-concept in reference to Mead's theory. Not to forget, this article discusses how communication and symbolic interactions through the Grindr application affect the mind, self, and society of the online gay community.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative writing approach with virtual ethnographic writing methods. As a writing method that reveals how individuals or cultural groups understand their virtual life, the main unrelatable feature is its virtual reality that becomes part of a writing object that needs to be understood by an individual ethnographic writer. In order not to dissolve in the virtual world, Christine Hine in

Arif (2012) describes some of the principles of virtual ethnography for which the ethnographers should be those who are also part of the cyberspace. The relationship between ethnographer with a subject or a writing object using technology is part of an ethnographer's personal experience when it comes to internet technology.

According to Arif (2012) in virtual ethnography, the interview technique was conducted in two phases. The first stage is done online with the subject of what is the focus of the writing problem. The second stage, done offline, to deepen online interviews or also clarified and confirmation of interviews that have been done online. This online and offline interview pattern is a pattern that virtual ethnographic writers have to do, to prevent information bias and the uncertainty of data validity.

Arif (2012) stated that participant observation techniques in the virtual ethnographic method were done in two ways: online and offline. Online, at least a virtual ethnographic writer is required to join the cyberspace community, and actively participate in the dynamics of the virtual community. Two intentions can be addressed in this online participant observation. First, observe directly the development of a community or group that is researched online, including the dynamics or issues, the theme spoke of. Secondly, observing and examining the verbal and non-verbal language used in online conversations.

Table 1. Informant characteristics

No.	Name	Age	Occupancy	Information
1.	Informant-A	22-year-old	Private Employee	Grindr user
2	Informant-B	23-year-old	Bartender/Artisan	Grindr user
3	Informant-C	22-year-old	Law Student	Grindr user
4	Informant-D	16-year-old	High School Student	Grindr user

Source: Research doc.

In this study, data is obtained from in-depth interviews with the informant who is a homosexual of the Grindr app user and also the result of observations by directly using the application. There are 4 active users of Grindr application aged 16 to 30 years. Also, these users are those who reside in Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) with SES A-C.

In its execution, the authors encountered obstacles in determining the informant of this study. This is because the motive of the user in utilizing and using the app Grindr is dominated only for sexual gratification. So the informant is difficult to be dug deeper if it is not done with sexual frills. This has made the authors change the main informant several times to obtain the necessary information regarding this study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The main author observed a form of verbal and non-verbal from the informants who are actively using Grindr application. The authors have been directly involved by using the application as if being part of the gay community which exists in the society. This is to obtain an overview of behavior and activities performed on the most popular and exclusively gay application.

The authors discover a bunch of interesting points related to the self-concept of the user in using the application. The encouragement which arises as well as motives in using the application is supported by various backgrounds. Furthermore, this study has successfully discovered and identified a variety of user types who use this application.

'Mind' in the Online Gay Community

George Herbert Mead, the originator of the theory of symbolic interactionism, greatly admired the ability of humans to use and utilize symbols. Mead in Mulyana (2010) argues that humans are unique because they can manipulate symbols based on consciousness. Symbols that are given meaning are interpreted as a representation of the interaction of a

phenomenon. Shibutani in Mulyana (2010) states that meaning, the first is a property of behavior and the second is an object property. So that a phenomenon and symbolic interaction can be interconnected and complementary.

Mead in Ardianto (2007) form three critical concepts that are needed and influence each other to form a theory of symbolic interactionism. Thus, the human mind (mind), and social interaction (self) are used to interpret and mediate society (society). According to Mead in Wulansari (2009), the mind is the ability to use symbols that are given meaning. The mind is a way of human action that takes place within the individual. Unconsciously, the mind is an interaction that occurs in humans, an inner struggle. But the mind is always related to others because the stimulus comes from outside the human self.

Self is the ability to accept yourself as an object. Self requires a social process, namely interpersonal communication. Where the self arises and develops through activities between social relations. Mead said that it was impossible to imagine a self that emerged without social experience. However, individuals can remain without social contact after self-development. Mead in Wulansari (2009) revealed that self is divided into "me" and "I". Self is the result of interactional processes that have long stages and processes. In this case means that "me" formed from the influence and interaction with others and the environment on him, and "I" formed from the creativity of an individual in creating himself.

Society is a social relationship that is created, built, and constructed by individuals in the middle of society. The involvement of these relationships bridges people in the process of taking roles in the community. Society has an important role in shaping the mind and self. Mead states that society influences an individual, giving individuals the ability through self-criticism from the community so that the individual can control himself.

Looking at the definition of mind, the authors see that every single informant who has observed, they are having views or thoughts about himself. This was obtained from observation and the interviews conducted. An individual forms his mind as the influence of his interaction with another individual. Informant-A gained various stimuli through his interaction with another individual. This was encouraged to think and have a desire to use Grindr. Besides, he thinks that using Grindr, it helped him easier to find others who also have an interest in male and gay.

> To me, this application is just for looking for a friend. Sometimes it is to keep our privacy if chat through WhatsApp with our gay friends, so I contact them via Grindr. But ya sometimes get contacted via WhatsApp if they give me their number. Otherwise via Line (*Informant-A*, Jakarta, 9/02/2019).

Moreover, in using Grindr, informant-A thinks that his privacy is safer. He has this thought as a stimulus of his interaction with others. Whereas, up until the interview has taken, no one from his inner circle who find out that he is bisexual and having an interest in male. Another stimulus that also forms his mind is from his interaction with his girlfriend. To keep his relationship, his girlfriend's feelings as well as his true identity, he prefers to choose complicated things. One of the tricks is frequently do install and reinstall.

Besides, from many gay applications that he mentioned, he has used three gay applications which are popular in Indonesia, there are Blued, Hornet, and Grindr. This implies that indirectly his encouragement and desires of himself are stating that he indeed needs those applications in his life. For him, the mentioned applications become media in expressing himself and to interact with other gays. Furthermore in several conversations obtained the conclusion that the application has provided an answer to his needs in sexual

matters. He conveyed that he has needs in making his sexual desires with males and the gay application is helping him with this. This is in contrast with his real-life in his real world, where he has to undemonstratively hide it when he interacted with his girlfriend.

In informant-B, the authors see several interesting facts about him. It is be seen that his interaction with others has formed his mind, especially in living his life as a gay. Homosexuality is still taboo in the community, so the existence of an application such as Grindr has become a medium that makes him easier to find other fellow gay men. Particularly, informant-B mentioned that he needs another person who can make a serious relationship with him. That is why he is using Grindr. However, he would not impose himself because of the reality that is happening on the application.

> Nothing much more, maybe I can find someone who likes me, if not, it also okay (*Informant-B*, Bogor, 23/02/2019).

Similar to informant-B, informant-C is also getting a stimulus which forms his mind. His background in using Grindr is because of his experience in having a boyfriend through that exclusive application. The relationship was going well and serious for about two years, makes informant-C feels comfortable, and thinks that Grindr has thrown him a lover. But, because of his boyfriend is passed away, it has encouraged him to be back in using Grindr. This also seeks his fortune to try to find another lover who similar to his late boyfriend and can make a serious relationship with him.

> Yeah, the point is, who knows this application can find me a lover who can replace him (*Informant-C,* Bogor, 10/03/2019).

Grindr exists as a medium for gay men to be able to interact with other gay men easily. Which is to hook up and fulfilling sexual desires.

These things also expressed by informant-D. His various verbal and non-verbal languages have exemplified that he is using Grindr just to fulfilling his sexual needs. As a 16-year-old teenager, he had various sexual stimuli and he enjoyed it. He also describes that those stimuli have formed his thought that Grindr is the perfect solution in fulfilling his sexual desires, especially with males. And it makes himself dependent and could not get rid it off from the influence of this exclusive gay application.

> This is exciting. Make an addiction. I swear I could not get off from these apps. If I have free time to play my phone, I must be opened Grindr to check if there is a chat or not. And also when I have nothing to do, I will play it, who knows I can meet someone for fun with (*Informant-D*, Jakarta, 23/03/2019).

According Shield (2018) these facts called socio-sexual. The diversity of desires expressed by those with shared sexual interests represents a unique networking culture. Socio-sexual networking refers to the process of interpersonal communication among those open to forming erotic, platonic, and practical connections, sometimes simultaneously. While in anthropology and zoology, socio-sexual refers to sexual activity outside of a committed relationship.

'Self' in the Online Gay Community

The thing that distinguishes humans from other creatures is the ability of a human being to do understanding and reflection on himself, which humans can see and dive into themselves. Humans can distance themselves, realize what they are doing, think, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.

Furthermore, self-definition according to Leary and MacDonald (2003) in the book Social Psychology, explains that to understand it there are five ways: (1) self, seen as a total person; (2) self is seen as a personality; (3) self is seen as a subject that experiences it (as experiencing

subject); (4) self is seen as an executive agent; (5) self, seen as a belief in yourself.

So that it can be concluded that self is psychological completeness that allows self-reflection to influence the experience of consciousness, which underlies all types of perceptions, beliefs, and feelings about oneself, and which allows a person to regulate his behavior. In other words, a person experiences his various moments in his life, then from each of the moments that occur in his life will be able to provide knowledge in the process of reflection they experience, even further in the process of contemplation.

On the informant-A can be seen that as a bisexual, he cast himself as a mature individual and has a very high curiosity. This concept does not come naturally and without any causes, it came from his interactions with others. His interaction with his inner circle has happened for many years. Until it develops himself who wants to try anything seems new to him and he never had, but actually, it is familiar in his life.

How informant-A starts his interaction with other users on Grindr interesting. Openly he said that he uses a fake profile picture to cover his identity. And he does not feel any problems with using a fake picture, because some of the users he knows also do the same to cover their truths. But in this case, there is something he missed. Because of high motivation to cover his real identity and his interest in males, he ignored the one who owns the picture. Something that might be harmful to others.

In contrast to the informant-A, informant-B is a gay man who does not care about what people think about himself. His interaction with people is open and relax. But if talking about preference, informant-B has a very high standard about other users who become his interlocutor.

In the conversation with the authors, informant-B showing that sometimes he is not serious in using Grindr, it is just to kill his free time. But he said that he does not like to use Grindr in his hometown, which filled with the men who are not his ideal type. Frequently his chat on that cyberspace is ended up quickly and unclear.

Informant-B is a gay man who he is. In creating his self, it was influenced by the sexual orientation that he already decide since high school, which is becoming gay. This makes him consistent about himself, open and does not want to live his life as someone else he does not want to. It clearly can be seen from his answers to the authors. He said that if there is a girl who likes him, he will feel awkward and tend to stay away. He does those things for some reason, he just does not want to hurt the girl's feeling if have a further relationship with him. And he also does not want to act like someone else whom he thinks is not him and pretends to have a girlfriend to cover his sexuality.

On the informant-C can be seen that his self forms based on his thought. He chooses to live two different life between his life in cyberspace and the real world. It just because he wants to cover his identity as gay. It is contrasted with his life in the real world, in using the application he openly shows that he is gay. But, it the family he has to cover that. He has covered his sexual orientation in his family because he does not want to make his family disappointed. Though, when it is not about family, he will be who he is who has an interest in males, especially the ones who become his lover.

The various conversation after engaged with informant-D, it shows that he is someone who loves a "have fun" thing. It is no other than to satisfy his desires and sexual needs. If asking whether he is gay or not, informant-D was puzzled to answer. But, he enjoys what he is doing with a guy.

The result of his interaction with other users on Grindr apps makes him open. But just for its users only. He acts confidently and fiery. It has proven from his chat with other users that with no such long words he asks them to have fun with him, and he did that just on the first

chat. Such a confident and fiery teenage gay. Psychologically this has influenced by his young age that is why automatically he will behave such things.

'Society' in the Online Gay Community

Society is a social relationship that created, built, and constructed an individual in the community. The involvement of those relationships is bridging a human in shaping his role in society. Garofalo et al in Hossain & Ferreira (2019) mentioned that social contexts in which youth live can have significant implications for their development and psychological adjustment.

The informant-A showing himself as an over-thinker and pushed by his conditions. Where he always figures out everything beforehand. Moreover, he always insecure about what will society thinks about him. He is also an individual who could not trust someone else easily. It can be seen from the way he always insecure about how his inner circle shape himself, so he always has many tricks to cover his true identity, and others could not uncover it. He could not put his trust in his inner circle, especially to others whom he thinks are just a compliment to his life. What makes him do such things? It is nothing but homophobia that has shaped by society. Zervoulis et al (2015) mentioned that homophobia is often experienced by gay people from their early years at school, within their families, within their immediate daily environment, and in broader society including its institutions, such as the media, workplaces or legislative bodies. Frequently the homosexuals were treated unfairly and excommunicated, experiencing much discrimination and violence. These have affected gay people's own beliefs and attitudes towards themselves. This is known as internalized homophobia.

In contrast to the social interaction that has been seen from informant-A, informant-B has a good interaction in society. Informant-B saw as an open individual. So it captures clearly that his relationship in the society is good. For example, it is in his work environment. Working at night entertainment industry has made him have friends with the same sexual orientation. And for sure some of them know that he is gay. His relationship with his close friends great, because friends accept each other as they are. It can be seen from the way informant-B open to his friends about his sexuality.

> Some of them know the fact that I am gay. Not all. But most of them know it (*Informant-B*, Bogor, 23/02/2019).

On the informant-B, society has not influenced him to control himself. This control he has from the preference that he made. So that this has managed himself in using the application as well as his interaction with other users on Grindr.

Differently with informant-B, on the informant-C and D, society has an important role in the control and form of their thought as well as their selves. Both of them are controlling their selves to cover their sexual identity and not to be known by his family. So, they do anything to cover it. Unfortunately, on the informant-D, it is obvious it can be seen that he is active and open in using Grindr. His high frequency to meet other users and having fun with has made him uncontrollable. Because if we talk about desires, so the desires itself who control it, not community perspective. Jaspal in Ives (2018) discovered that Grindr is perceived to be a highly sexualized app by its users. There is a coercive social norm for using the app for the purpose of seeking sex, with some evidence that he had felt "joy" to the sexual things and adopted promiscuous behavior to fit within the perceived norms. This demonstrates explicitly how perceived social norms on the app can directly impact on user's behavior, like what informant-D mentioned.

Some interesting facts can be seen from informant-D. Although in interview times he acts openly, indifferent, and ignorant about others will think about himself, it is different if it comes to the society. Especially about his sexual

orientation status. He has a big fear to be uncovered as who he is. He thinks that no one from his family members nor his close friends knows about his homosexuality. But the authors think that some already knew about his activity in liking a male. It is nothing than because he is too open to show himself on Grindr. Instead of attracting other users' attention, he revealed his sexual orientation to the public of the cyberspace or online community.

Talking about online communities, Jasmadi (2008) states that virtual communities or commonly referred to as online communities are a group of people in communicating using the internet as the main media and do not rely on physical face-to-face meetings. Meanwhile, according to Rayport and Jaworski (2003) states that virtual communities are interactions between users through the internet network.

It usually occurs through interactions with one another (one-one, such as e-mail or gaming) or with multiple users (such as in a chat room). Based on this it can be concluded that the virtual community is a container that allows each of its members to communicate with each other through the medium of the internet, anytime and anywhere without being hindered by space and time limits.

Self-concept Development of Individuals in the Online Gay Community

A picture and assessment of ourselves obtained by observing ourselves are called self-concept. William D. Brooks in Grace (2009) defines the concept of self as our views and feelings about ourselves. This perception of self can be psychological, social, or physical. This concept is not only a descriptive picture but also an evaluation of self. So the concept of self includes what is thought and what is felt about yourself.

Hurlock (2005) states that the concept of self is the concept of someone from whom and what he is. This concept is a mirror image, determined largely by the roles and relationships of others, what seems to be another person's reaction to him. Meanwhile,

according to Rogers in Sobur (2003) reveals that self-concept is a conscious part of a realized and symbolized phenomenon, i.e. "I" is the center of reference to every experience. This self-concept is a core part of an individual experience that is gradually distinguished and symbolized as a shadow of self that says "what and who I really am" and "What I should do". The concept of self is not just inherent in individuals, but several factors affect it.

Rakhmat (2009) classifies these factors into two major parts, namely significant others, and reference groups. Not all others have the same influence on ourselves. There are the most influential ones, those who are closest to ourselves. George Herbert Mead calls it significant others that are very important to others. Those deemed important will have a considerable role in the formation of individual attitudes and actions.

The reference group is the second factor that influences self-concept. Rakhmat said that there are groups that emotionally bind us and influence the formation of our self-concept. This is referred to as the reference group. By seeing this group, individuals will direct their behavior and adjust themselves to the characteristics of the group. According to Wylie in Putri (2012), several factors can influence the formation of self-concept. Among them are age, appearance, education, relationships, sexual orientation, emotional maturity, gender, culture, and life experiences. Each individual will experience different factors, according to the family environment and the surrounding social community.

The inner-circle who become significant others is an individual from the family. In the previous years, the family consisted of father, mother, brother, and sister. But recently this meaning has expanded, so the family consists of grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunty, and other cousins, especially in the tradition of the society in Indonesia. They are who have important roles in developing someone's self-concept.

Informant-A is having a positive family atmosphere. Where he does not experience any violence in the family, does not lack affection, and excommunicated. His relationship and interaction with the family are so harmonious. But this has pressured him to be who he is and shows his true colors. Because he thinks as an older brother he should be a perfect example for his siblings. Do not make the family embarrassed, and have good academic achievements. Pettigrew in Meyer (2003) said that human beings learn about themselves by comparing themselves with others. The evaluation by others such as stereotypes and prejudices directed at minority (gay) persons in society may lead to adverse psychological outcomes. These had experienced by informant-A.

These factors make informant-A introvert. Furthermore, he also does not put any trust in his family. So he does not want if his family to know that he has a different sexual orientation and has an interest in males. This condition has forced him to live under full of compulsion and not his real self. But, to have the acknowledgment from the family, he has to do that. One of them is having a love relationship with a woman.

On the informant-B can be seen that his interaction and relationship with family is not good. The authors felt it from the interview with him. Informant-B said that he frequently back to his hometown, but one thing that makes the authors wonder, he does not back to his parent's house but to his flat. Whereas his parents live in the same city, and also in Jakarta, he has rented a flat. This clearly shows that he feels uncomfortable surrounded by his family. When the authors asked about this matter, he answered that he choose to rent a flat in his hometown rather than go back to his parent's house because it makes him comfortable and free to live his life.

When asking further about his family he was not enthusiastic to answer. Even sometimes he tried to divert the subject of conversation and did not want to answer it. This makes the author more curious and assumes that it is true that he has an unpleasant relationship with his family. It makes him someone who does not care about his surroundings and more focused on his own life. Because for him the life that he lives is a hundred percent his responsibility and no one can interrupt his life.

If you take a look at a relationship and interaction of informant-C with his family, there are several interesting points to be discussed. Informant-C is an individual who lives far apart with his parents and family. But, this does not mean that informant-C got a lack of affection from the family, he has so much affection from his mother. Whereas his mom always contacted him to just ask his condition and sometimes asked him to go back to his hometown if he has free time.

Some conflicts that always happened between him and his father as well as his older brother, and attention from his mother who always pamper him, has made him closer to his mother. Unquestionably, this has made him unconsciously and as time passed by he needs a male figure in his life that cares of him and he can take care of. That is why he has become a homosexual who needs and looks for someone who can be his partner to make a serious relationship.

> Having a boyfriend is good, there is someone who cares for me and I can take care of too. It is different feelings (*Informant-C*, Bogor, 10/03/2019).

On the informant-D, he does not obtain many stories about his relationship and interaction with the family. He just shared that he is really afraid if his family knows if he has interested and having sexual relations with other males. He is the only child in the family, up until now he still lives with his father and mother, the parents who liberate informant-D in making friends. This also seen that his parents pamper informant-D. It is associated with the fact of his luxurious kinds of stuff and his vehicle.

Besides, from his attitude can be seen that he is the only child who pampered by the family.

A community or small group has an important role as a reference group in shaping someone's self-concept. The community is created because of the same feelings, the same responsibility, and needs each other from its member. Each individual who becomes a part of the community makes social interaction until creating a social relationship and know each other.

It is the same as what informant-A do. He stated that he once joined some gay communities virtually. He joined these communities from social media. This is to make more friends and knows other males who also have interested in male. But informant-B and C said that they never joined any gay community.

The reference group is influencing the informants. But, unconsciously they think that they never joined any community, whether it is exclusively for gay or not. Generally, these informants have not joined any gay community which makes them tied to specific rules that belong to the aforementioned communities. Moreover, each reference group of the informants has guided them to be what gay he is going to be, this is clearly can be seen from them but they just unconscious about that.

Wylie in Putri (2012) classified some factors which influence the development of self-concept, there are age, age, appearance, education, relationships, sexual orientation, emotional maturity, gender, culture, and life experiences. In this study, the authors have discovered that social media also has a big influence in developing someone's self-concept. Whereas the users can be very addictive and formed their self-concept.

After observing the process of self-concept development through online gay-dating application Grindr, the authors uncovered many unique points. The close read of data also uncovered at least ten types of abovementioned application users based on the self-concept that they form. They are: first, an active Grindr user who stated himself as a discreet. Where privacy is on top of everything. This individual is an introvert. Because of extra-introverted and keep his privacy, this kind of user does not use any profile picture and leave it blank. In some cases, he leaves the username blank. Everything seems so mysterious.

Second, to cover himself, this user typically using a fake picture and download it on some sites. This could make harms others, but this kind of individual ignores it as long as his privacy is being safe. There are many motives of this kind of user, from just looking at a new friend, partner, sexual needs, or just to hawking prostitution service.

Third, the active Grindr user who introverted but he brave enough to use his real picture. But, he crops on the head part of the picture and leaves the body alone. Or they just use the picture that does not shows his real face but shows another part of his body that he thinks will become a selling point to attract other users.

Fourth, the active Grindr user who introverted but has a motive in fulfilling his sexual needs. This type of individual frequently will directly chat with other users who attracted him, then he will send his real picture alongside with other pictures that he thinks will attract his chat partner.

Fifth, there is the active Grindr user who uses the application with the motive of selling something. Usually, he sells something connected with sexual tools needed by other users, one of them is poppers.

Sixth, the active Grindr user who extroverted. Where he will use his picture and hopes can make friends. Usually, this kind of individual just uses a normal picture and unattractive to other users. Why so? It just because this type of user who uses his normal picture is hoping that he can get a chat friend who shared the same idea that using Grindr is not for sex matter.

Seventh, the active Grindr user who extroverted and looking for a love partner. This

kind of individual varies, from the one who just uses a normal picture to the one who uses a real picture that shows his beautiful body. There is also information on the profile that he is looking for LTR or long term relationship.

Eighth, the active Grindr user who extroverted and hawking prostitution service. This kind of user usually us a high-quality picture from his dedicated photoshoot that shows his beautiful and athletic body. The key feature is this individual will type his profile with MB or money boy information.

Ninth, the active Grindr user who extroverted and just looking for popularity and some financial supports. Usually, he will show his handsome face with his good-looking and athletic body. Frequently just interested to mature men who already wealthy and can afford him financially. This type of individual has various social classes, from the one who sophisticated to the one who just stays at the cheap flat.

Tenth, the active Grindr user who extra-extroverted. This can be seen from his real picture that he uses. The completed information about himself on the profile. Furthermore, this kind of individual will put their real social media accounts on the profile. There are Facebook, Twitter, and also Instagram accounts. Some of them are more than that, they are willing to put his mobile phone number so other users can contact him easily.

CONCLUSION

On the homosexual male can be seen that how others shape himself is influencing his thought. Whether it is a stimulus from his interaction with others or his created thought from his creativity. Besides, the norms and moral of society has an important role in shaping thought and self, so the homosexual male is having control of himself.

Moreover, a sexual experience also become has triggered them to convey that they have sexual orientation as gay. Something that they never felt before, and once they feel it they just become addicted and want to get some more. This has made them who like to have a relationship with a male. Furthermore, Grindr has helped that process as a medium which makes them interacted with other gays.

The reference group is influencing the informants. But, unconsciously they think that they never joined any community, whether it is exclusively for gay or not. Generally, these informants have not joined any gay community which makes them tied to specific rules that belong to the aforementioned communities. Moreover, each reference group of the informants has guided them to be what gay he is going to be, this is clearly can be seen from them but they just unconscious about that.

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