

## **Analysis of Single Account and Multiple Account Users on Instagram Social Media: A Comparative Review of Self-Disclosure**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The phenomenon of using multiple accounts on Instagram is increasing, especially among students, with each type of account used for different purposes. This study aims to determine the differences in self-disclosure levels between students who use single accounts and multiple accounts on Instagram. The research method uses a quantitative approach with a comparative design. This study involved 102 active student respondents who use Instagram in Banjarmasin City, who were divided evenly into two groups, the sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique based on certain criteria. The measuring instrument used was the Revised Self-Disclosure Scale (RSDS) which has been modified according to the context of Instagram social media. The results showed that there was no significant difference between the two groups. The implications of this study are expected to increase students awareness in managing information disclosure wisely on social media.

**Keywords:** Instagram, Multiple Accounts, Self-Disclosure, Single Account, Students

### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes in the way individuals communicate, share information, and build social relationships online. Social media has become a primary platform for users to express themselves, connect with each other, and manage their personal and social identities (Rahayu et al., 2023). In January 2024, the number of social media users in Indonesia reached 139 million, or approximately 49.9% of the population, with Instagram being one of the most popular platforms with 100.9 million users (Kemp, 2024). Instagram's popularity is inextricably linked to its interactive features, such as photos, videos, stories, and reels, as well as the account switching feature, which allows users to manage more than one account without having to log in and out of the app (Sisnawar et al., 2023).

The phenomenon of multiple accounts, having more than one account on a single platform, is becoming increasingly prevalent, especially among university students. Typically, users maintain one primary account as their public identity and a second account for personal use or a more limited audience (Widyadhana et al., 2023). Previous research has shown that multiple accounts are often perceived as a safer space to express feelings, personal experiences, or emotional content without having to consider judgment from a wider audience (Permana &

Sutedja, 2021). The primary motivation for using multiple accounts is related to self-disclosure behavior (Nabillah & Hanurawan, 2022).

This phenomenon is closely related to the concept of self-disclosure, which is an individual's openness in consciously and intentionally sharing personal information with others Wheelless et al., in (Pramesti & Dewi, 2022). Self-disclosure theory, according to (Pramesti & Dewi, 2022), encompasses several dimensions such as information depth, honesty, accuracy, intentionality, and interpersonal influence.

In the context of social media, self-disclosure can be influenced by various factors such as perceived privacy, emotional regulation, the need for acceptance, and audience management strategies (Nabillah & Hanurawan, 2022). However, previous research findings have been inconsistent. Several studies have found that multiple account users express themselves more freely (Damayanti & Sugandi, 2024), while other studies have shown that the number of accounts does not always affect the level of information disclosure (Annisa & Boer, 2024).

Based on the description of the phenomena and theoretical studies above, this study focuses on answering the following research questions: (1) Are there differences in self-disclosure levels between students who use a single account and multiple accounts on Instagram? In line with this research problem formulation, the purpose of this study is to determine the differences in self-disclosure levels between students who use a single account and multiple accounts on Instagram. Therefore, this study is expected to provide two benefits: theoretical and practical: (1) theoretically, it can enrich studies on self-disclosure behavior in the context of social media use, and (2) practically, it can provide insights for students and Instagram users so they can manage their personal information appropriately.

## **METHODS**

This study used a comparative quantitative method to determine differences in self-disclosure levels between users of one and multiple Instagram accounts. This study used only one independent variable, namely self-disclosure, which refers to an individual's openness in consciously and intentionally disclosing general and personal information to others.

This study used a single primary scale, the Revised Self-Disclosure Scale (RSDS), adapted by (Pramesti & Dewi, 2022) based on one developed by Wheelless, Nesser, and McCroskey. This scale was then modified by the researchers to suit the Instagram platform, with an average Aiken's V value of 0.968, indicating that all items were suitable for use in the research context. This scale consists of 31 items measuring five dimensions of self-disclosure: Amount (amount of information); Depth (depth of information); Honesty-Accuracy (truthfulness and accuracy); Positive-Negativity (nature of information); and Intentionality (intentionality in disclosing information).

The sample in this study was determined using g-power software version 3.1.9.7. Based on the research parameters used in the two-group t-test, namely an effect size ( $f^2$ ) of 50%, a significance level ( $\alpha$  error probability) of 0.05, a power of 0.80, and a ratio of 1:1, the calculation results indicate that the minimum sample size required is 102 respondents. This sample will be divided evenly into two groups of 51 respondents each. The first group consists of single Instagram account users, and the second group consists of multiple Instagram account users.

The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, taking into account certain predetermined criteria (Azwar, 2017). The sample criteria in this study were: (1) active students aged 18-22; and (2) students who actively use Instagram. This research was conducted in several stages. First, the researcher obtained permission to use the scale from previous researchers and modified the item content to be relevant to Instagram user behavior. Content validation was conducted using expert judgment, which also provided suggestions for improvement. Subsequently, a pilot test was conducted on student Instagram users outside the primary population to test item readability and scale reliability, achieving a Cronbach's alpha reliability of 0.884.

Research data was collected using a Google Form with a Likert scale of 1-5 categories and then analyzed using an independent-samples t-test using JASP software. Prior to conducting the t-test, the researchers first conducted assumption tests, including the Shapiro-Wilk normality test and the Levene homogeneity test.

## RESULTS

Initial data analysis was conducted descriptively using hypothetical calculations to illustrate the distribution of scores on the self-disclosure variable.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Self-Disclosure Score**

Variable	Hypothetical Data			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Self-Disclosure	31	155	93	21

The minimum scale score was 31, the maximum score was 155, the mean was 93, and the standard deviation was 21. The gender distribution of respondents in this study was differentiated based on the type of account used: single account and multiple account. In the single account user group, 23 respondents were male, or 45%, while 28 respondents were female, or 55%. Meanwhile, in the multiple account user group, the majority of respondents were female, at 44 respondents, or 86%, while only 7 respondents were male, or 14%. This finding indicates that multiple account use is more common among female respondents than male respondents.

Based on these scores, the respondents were further categorized into three categories: low, medium, and high. A description of each scale category can be seen in the following table.

**Table 2. Categorization of Self-Disclosure based on the number of Instagram Accounts**

Variable	Category	Range	Single Account		Multiple Account	
			$\Sigma$ Respondent	%	$\Sigma$ Respondent	%
Self-Disclosure	Low	$x < 92$	4	8%	7	14%
	Medium	$92 \leq x < 118$	33	65%	38	78%
	High	$x \geq 118$	14	27%	4	8%
<b>Jumlah</b>			<b>51</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the grouping of self-disclosure levels based on the number of accounts, it can be seen that the majority of subjects, both single and multiple account users, fall into the moderate self-disclosure category. Single account users have a higher percentage of high self-disclosure, at 27%, compared to multiple account users, at 8%. Conversely, multiple account users are more likely to have low self-disclosure, at 14%, compared to single account users, at 8%.

**Table 3. Categorization of Self-Disclosure based on the Self-Disclosure dimensions**

Dimensi	Amount		Depth		Honesty-Accuracy		Positiveness-Negativeness		Intent	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Category										
Low	13	13%	9	9%	12	12%	16	16%	5	5%
Medium	72	71%	71	70%	70	69%	68	67%	79	77%
High	17	17%	22	22%	20	20%	18	18%	18	18%
Quantity	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>%</b>

The table above, based on the analysis of self-disclosure dimensions, shows that the majority of respondents in this study fall into the moderate category across all self-disclosure dimensions, with the largest distribution in the intent dimension at 77%. The high category tends to be smaller in number than the moderate category, with the largest distribution in the depth dimension at 22%. Meanwhile, the low category has the smallest percentage in almost all dimensions, especially the intent dimension, which only reaches 5%.

A normality test was conducted to determine whether the self-disclosure data is normally distributed. Based on the Shapiro-Wilk test, the W value was 0.979 with a significance value (p) of 0.098. Because the p value > 0.05, the data is considered normally distributed, thus meeting the assumption of normality. Next, a homogeneity of variance test was conducted using Levene's test to determine the similarity of variances between groups. The results showed an F value of 1.096 with a p value of 0.298. Because p > 0.05, it can be concluded that the variances between groups are homogeneous. Therefore, the data met the requirements for parametric hypothesis testing. All data processing was performed using JASP software version 19.3.

**Table 4. Hypothesis t-test**

Variable	t	df	p	Effect Size
Self-Disclosure	-1.490	100	0.139	-0.295

The table above presents the results of an independent sample t-test used to determine whether there is a difference in self-disclosure scores between single and multiple account users on Instagram. The analysis yielded a t-value of -1.490 with a degrees of freedom (df) of 100 and a significance level (p) of 0.139. Since the p-value > 0.05, it can be concluded that there is no

significant difference between the two groups. Furthermore, the effect size of -0.295 indicates that the difference is small.

## DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine the differences in self-disclosure levels among college students using single and multiple Instagram accounts. Based on the analysis, the research hypothesis that there is a significant difference in self-disclosure levels between single and multiple Instagram users is rejected. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, stating that there is no significant difference in self-disclosure levels between single and multiple Instagram users. This provides the basis for further discussion on student self-disclosure when using Instagram, particularly in terms of the number of accounts held. This is especially true considering the initial assumption that multiple account users have more freedom to express themselves freely. However, the findings of this study indicate that the number of accounts does not directly influence a person's tendency to disclose themselves on Instagram.

This aligns with research by (Nabila et al., 2024), which showed that gender and age are not the primary determinants of self-disclosure levels. Instead, self-disclosure levels tend to be generally low and are more influenced by psychological and interpersonal variables. (Jaidka, 2024) also stated that account status, whether private or public, did not significantly alter self-disclosure patterns, and privacy concerns did not moderate the relationship between self-disclosure and subjective well-being. This finding is further supported by the findings of (Selviana et al., 2024), who found that self-acceptance and interpersonal trust contributed only a small 3.8% to self-disclosure, suggesting that many other factors play a role that cannot be explained solely by the number of accounts.

Most respondents in this study had a moderate level of self-disclosure, indicating that most students tend to be balanced in sharing information on Instagram. These results align with the study by (Salsa et al., 2024), which found that most second-account users exhibited moderate levels of self-disclosure. (Massaro & Simanjuntak, 2024), also showed that most student social media users, particularly Twitter/X, also had moderate levels of self-disclosure. These findings confirm that students tend to maintain a balance in sharing personal information online, being neither too open nor completely closed. This balance is also related to the need to maintain a self-image on social media, the desire to build relationships, and the consideration of privacy risks.

(Tandres & Winduwati, 2024) state that personal accounts are used to build a public image, private accounts for sharing more emotional and intimate content, and professional accounts for branding purposes. Each type of account reflects different nuances of emotional intensity, honesty, and depth, reflecting conscious digital identity control. Meanwhile, (Bur et al., 2024) found that the use of a second account as part of multiple accounts is more often used to share negative feelings, conflicts, and achievements not shared on the primary account, while still considering existing boundaries. These results reinforce that the intensity of self-disclosure is determined more by interpersonal factors such as trust in the audience and the need for authenticity than simply the number of accounts.

Based on gender distribution, the group of multiple account users is dominated by women (86%), while men make up only 14%. This finding is consistent with research conducted by

(Salsa et al., 2024), which stated that the majority of second Instagram account users are women, who tend to be more likely to engage in self-disclosure, particularly when it comes to expressing personal experiences and emotions online. This finding is further supported by (Massaro & Simanjuntak 2024), who found that women dominate the high self-disclosure category compared to men in social media use.

In the high self-disclosure category, the number of single account users tends to be higher than that of multiple account users. Conversely, in the low self-disclosure category, multiple account users predominate. This is supported by descriptive results for the depth dimension, which shows a distribution of 22% in the high self-disclosure category; this dimension is the only one showing a significant difference between single and multiple account users. These findings indicate that the extent to which deep personal and emotional information is shared on Instagram is significantly influenced by the number of accounts owned.

Research by (Kashian, 2024) states that the quality of self-disclosure, especially in-depth information, contributes more to social relationships and audience attitudes than the quantity of information shared. This suggests that depth of information is a crucial aspect of self-disclosure effectiveness, not how often someone shares. Meanwhile, (Annisa & Boer, 2024) found that Generation Z spontaneously expresses emotions through the Instagram story feature, demonstrating differences in self-disclosure patterns between individuals, even within the same platform. (Firmansyah et al., 2024) also stated that college students utilize features like Instagram story as a means of coping and limited self-expression. This means that despite openness, emotional intensity and depth of information are maintained according to user comfort.

Theoretically, multiple accounts are considered to provide a freer space for expression, but in practice, filtering or self-control mechanisms emerge because users feel the need to maintain certain boundaries, even within accounts perceived as more private. This is supported by findings (Damayanti & Sugandi 2024), which show that even though second-party accounts are viewed as safe spaces, students remain selective in disclosing information. This is in line with research by (Widodo et al., 2024) who also found that social context and audience perception remain key considerations in determining the type of information shared, even on more personal accounts like second-party Instagram accounts.

The predominantly female sample composition in this study may also be a contributing factor to the lack of differences. Previous research has shown that women generally tend to share personal information more expressively than men, but their control over privacy is stronger and more stable. Therefore, gender homogeneity in the sample may reduce the variation in self-disclosure levels between groups.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that there is no difference in self-disclosure levels between students who use a single account and multiple accounts on Instagram. This finding indicates that the number of accounts an individual has does not directly influence their tendency to disclose themselves on social media. Both single and multiple account users tend to have moderate levels of self-disclosure, with relatively similar self-disclosure patterns.

This study confirms that self-disclosure behavior is more influenced by psychological factors and personal preferences, such as privacy management, emotional regulation, digital social norms, and audience selection, than by the number of accounts owned. Therefore, the presence of a second account does not necessarily make an individual more or less open in sharing personal information.

Future research is recommended to explore more deeply the psychological variables that influence self-disclosure behavior, and consider qualitative or mixed-method approaches to understand subjective meanings and personal strategies in managing digital identity. Further studies could also explore differences in digital behavior between single and multiple account users based on different age groups and cultural backgrounds. Research across social media platforms is crucial for capturing broader dynamics. Practically, the results of this study can serve as a reflection for students in limiting personal information wisely, as well as building a healthy and balanced self-image in the digital space.

### LIMITATION

This study has several limitations, one of which is the challenge of finding appropriate expert judges, considering that scheduling with the experts is quite difficult and requires repeated follow-ups to ensure the instrument validation process runs smoothly. Furthermore, during the instrument trial phase, the number of respondents did not reach the ideal target of 155 respondents calculated from 31 items  $\times$  5 respondents per item. After three weeks of implementation, only 101 respondents were collected. This is due to limited human resources and the difficulty of finding respondents who meet the criteria outside the main population. In primary data collection, researchers also faced obstacles in finding respondents for single account users, where the process took almost two weeks, in contrast to the multiple account group which could be met in just two days. In addition to technical constraints, limitations also arise from the quantitative approach used, where exploration of the dynamics of each individual's self-disclosure was less in-depth because it was limited to numerical data without understanding the subjective context of each respondent.

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