

ABSTRACT

Second accounts on Instagram have become an emotional outlet for Generation Z to express feelings they cannot share on their main accounts. This study aims to explore the motives and meanings behind using Instagram Story features on second accounts for emotional expression. The study uses a qualitative method with Alfred Schutz's phenomenology, George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism—particularly the concepts of mind, self, and society and Erving Goffman's dramaturgy. Five female Generation Z users were interviewed. Findings reveal that their emotional expression is shaped by because motives (past experiences and social demands) and in order to motives (validation, stress relief, emotional connection). Symbols such as emojis, text, and music are consciously selected and socially interpreted. The “mind” reflects users' awareness when deciding what to share, the “self” appears in how they present their authentic identity, and “society” is represented by the close digital audience who co-create meaning with them. Viewed through dramaturgy, second accounts act as a backstage space where users reveal their honest selves, in contrast to the curated image on their main accounts.

Keywords: *Generation Z, second account, emotion, symbol, motive*