

## 20th Digitalk Discusses Self-Image in Digital Era

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Digitalk, monthly discussion of UGM Faculty of Social and Political Sciences' Center for Digital Society, has returned to discuss issues related to trends, practices, and problems of digital communities in Indonesia and the world. The *20th Digitalk* held on Wednesday (8/29) presented two popular figures on social media to review the issue of self-image formation in the digital era.

Wicaksono, former journalist who is now more popular on the internet as "Ndoro Kakung", stated that self-image is the midpoint between how we perceive ourselves and how people perceive us.

In the digital era, where a person's image is built by what they show online, self-image on social media becomes very important.

"Personal branding is important because it is useful for us. Aside from boosting self-confidence, it can also enhance our credibility. We may be criticized, but with strong branding, our credibility will remain strong," he explained.

Even so, he admitted that self-image formation in this era is not easy, especially in the pursuit of



popularity. To become popular, one should be able to build an authentic image and be consistent. This authenticity distinguishes a person from his competitors so he can attract the target audience easily.

“How could a lawyer or doctor become more famous than the others? Is this because they are smarter? Indeed, some are more famous because they have different image.”

He mentioned the 7 aspects that can build a strong self-image. Besides authenticity and consistency, narration, skill, visibility, value proposition, and network are important supporting factors.

“If we rarely post, rarely interact, how can we become famous? There must be a frequency and visibility. Building a strong image will make our audience recognize us easily through the positive values we build,” he concluded.

On this occasion, editor-in-chief of *mojok.co*, Agus Mulyadi, described how he gained popularity through an accidentally formed self-image. Long before he was known as a writer, people knew him for his photo editing skills of his customers with famous celebrities.

“I never imagined myself as a photo editor, but when my edit went viral, that image latched onto me,” said Gusmul, his nickname.

He began to realize the importance of self-image when he tried to change his image as a photo editor into a writer. At that time, he had published several books containing stories he uploaded on his blog.

From this experience, he understood that differentiation and consistency are important. Therefore, he advised social media users to build a unique image and be consistent because it does not happen overnight.

“It took me around two years to build that image. It is indeed difficult, but consistency is essential.”

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