

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana mahasiswa Ilmu Komunikasi Angkatan 2022 Universitas Malikussaleh melakukan manajemen kesan dalam membangun personal branding di *LinkedIn*. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan perspektif Teori Dramaturgi Erving Goffman, khususnya konsep front stage dan back stage. Informan penelitian berjumlah empat mahasiswa yang dipilih secara purposive berdasarkan keaktifan menggunakan *LinkedIn* kelengkapan profil, aktivitas personal branding, dan kesediaan memberikan informasi. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi nonpartisipan terhadap akun *LinkedIn* wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa Ilmu Komunikasi Angkatan 2022 Universitas Malikussaleh melakukan manajemen kesan secara sadar dalam membangun personal branding di *LinkedIn* melalui komunikasi verbal dan nonverbal. Manajemen kesan verbal terlihat melalui penyusunan headline, ringkasan profil, deskripsi pengalaman organisasi, serta penggunaan gaya bahasa pada unggahan dan komentar yang disesuaikan dengan karakter komunikasi profesional. Sementara itu, manajemen kesan nonverbal terlihat melalui pemilihan foto profil formal, penggunaan fitur Featured, serta penyajian konten visual yang mendukung kredibilitas profesional. Berdasarkan teori Dramaturgi Erving Goffman, *LinkedIn* menjadi *front stage* tempat mahasiswa menampilkan identitas dan aktivitas profesional kepada publik, sedangkan proses perencanaan konten, penyuntingan, dan evaluasi respons audiens menjadi bagian dari *back stage*. Masing-masing informan memiliki arah personal branding yang berbeda sesuai pengalaman dan kompetensi yang ingin ditonjolkan, tetapi tetap menunjukkan autentisitas, konsistensi, spesialisasi, dan visibilitas dalam membangun identitas profesional.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen Kesan, Personal Branding, *LinkedIn* Dramaturgi, Mahasiswa.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe how Communication Science students from the Class of 2022 at Malikussaleh University engage in impression management to build their personal branding on LinkedIn. The study employs a descriptive qualitative approach utilizing Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory, specifically the concepts of "front stage" and "back stage." Four students served as informants, selected purposively based on their active LinkedIn usage, profile completeness, personal branding activities, and willingness to provide information. Data were collected through non-participant observation of LinkedIn accounts, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The results indicate that these students consciously manage their impressions to build personal branding on LinkedIn through both verbal and non-verbal communication. Verbal impression management is evident in the crafting of headlines, profile summaries, and organizational experience descriptions, as well as the use of a professional communication style in posts and comments. Meanwhile, non-verbal impression management is demonstrated through the selection of formal profile photos, the use of the "Featured" section, and the presentation of visual content that reinforces professional credibility. Applying Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory, LinkedIn serves as the "front stage" where students present their professional identities and activities to the public, whereas content planning, editing, and the evaluation of audience responses constitute the "back stage." Each informant pursues a distinct personal branding direction based on the experiences and competencies they wish to highlight, yet all demonstrate authenticity, consistency, specialization, and visibility in constructing their professional identities.

Keywords: Impression Management, Personal Branding, LinkedIn, Dramaturgy, Students.