Construction of mothers identity in online community study of members of Halo Ibu Community

by Muchammad Nasucha

CONSTRUCTION OF MOTHERS IDENTITY IN ONLINE COMMUNITY: STUDY OF MEMBERS OF HALO IBU COMMUNITY)

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Transition to motherhood presents many challenges for women. Negotiating changes and self-identity has become one of the most intriguing ones. During this period, women's need for information and support increase. 'Halo Ibu', the pioneer of the maternal support online community, aims to help women in their transition to motherhood. This research attempts to investigate how mothers' identity, constructed with the background of their community members as well as to know the role that community, plays in the lives of a mother. The theory used is Mead's Symbolic Interactionism and the concept of mother identity construction proposed by Laney et al.. This is a qualitative study with a constructivist paradigm. This research employed interviews and observation as data gathering processes. The informants were the founder, the content creators, and the coordinator of

the community. Results indicated that there was a simultaneous dialectic process between internalization, objectivation, and externalization about the community's values which are self-love, self-awareness, and non-judgemental support. This process was present during the phase of mother identity construction. Even though it is an online community, the construction of reality regarding community and identity concepts is based on experiences, interactions, and information searched by individuals both online and offline.

INTRODUCTION

In their study, Abrams & Curran (2011) wrote that the birth of a child constitutes a major developmental event for women (Martell, 2001). Motherhood entails constructing a new conception of self, acquiring and mastering new behaviors and skills, and accepting the permanency of change (Mercer, 1995). For many women, the transition to motherhood is difficult (Heisler & Ellis, 2008). The transition to motherhood presents several challenges for new moms stemming from physical and emotional changes (Heisler & Ellis, 2008), a lack of a strong network to turn to for support (Choi, Et Al, 2005), and feelings of isolation and loneliness (Choi, et al., 2005). Women must also negotiate the ways that the transition to motherhood influences their self-identity, as well as their personal and professional relationships. As women manage their recovery, negotiate changes in relationships and identities, their needs for information and support increase (Nelson, 2003).

Another research on the role of community in women's transition to motherhood stated that while women still may turn to family and friends for support and guidance as they transition to motherhood, a growing number of women turn to the Internet as a way to seek information, to find other mothers, and to tell their own stories of motherhood. Research suggested that mothers are developing an increasingly strong presence online as the number of parenting websites dedicated to family planning, pregnancy and motherhood continue to rise (Madge & O'Connor, 2006). Online communities provide a valuable resource for both support and information during pregnancy and motherhood (Drentea & Moren Cross, 2011).

Past research mentioned that mothers are more heavily engaged in social media for giving and receiving social support (Tomfohrde & Reinke, 2016). They are one of the

top online users, with three out of four mothers using social media (Kaufmann & Buckner, 2014). The involvement of new mothers in digital media, such as blogging and social media can improve their well-being allowing them to connect to the outside world (McDaniel, 2012). Other research noted mothers in Russia found that Facebook more informative and supportive vehicle of communication than Instagram (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2017).

Indonesian mothers are also heavily engaged in social media. According to an online survey conducted by The Asian Parent and Tickled Media in 2018 that included about 1000 millennial mothers (born in 1980-1995), Instagram has taken over Facebook as the most favourite social media platform. It was noted that more than 98.5 percent of Indonesian mothers at least have one Instagram account. About 34 percent of mothers access Instagram for 1-3 hours a day, while the other 16 percent of mothers at least spend a minimum of 10 hours a day to access this social media platform (Sarosa, 2018).

Mothers' involvement in digital media can be shown by being a member of an online community. Based on researchers' observation, currently, there are some existing mother communities in Indonesia namely 'Urban Mama', 'Productive Mama', 'Halo Ibu', 'Changemaker Mom', 'Mamapedia', and 'Institut Ibu Profesional'. From those communities on the Internet, one that steals the spotlight is 'Halo Ibu' Community. It has a different approach than the rest. If other communities are meant to be partners in raising the children, 'Halo Ibu' focuses on maternal well-being. In communicating with mothers, 'Halo Ibu' often encourages mothers to be aware of their mental well-being. They also aim to create a friendly and supportive atmosphere between mothers. (haloibu.id)

In addition to producing themed content on their social media platforms such as Instagram, websites, and YouTube, 'Halo Ibu' also regularly runs a paid offline event titled mother's circle and postpartum talk. Based on previous studies regarding communities, events and media are particularly helpful in attracting individuals to join the community (Arindita, Ruvira & Shambodo, 2019).

'Halo Ibu' 's purpose is to help women make their role transition as mothers easier. One of the most important things is the ability to accept a new identity as a mother with all its consequences. Identity is a part of self that we're known to others. An important way to explore identity is through interactions with others.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The old concepts that had been brought up by the earlier theorists, like Cooley with looking glass-self, then Blumler, Mead, and others that seeded it in the interactionism theory became an important ground in the viewing of the problem of self-identity within an environmental circle that seems to be too important to ignore social media at present. (Griffin, 2011).

According to Laney, et al. (2015), in their research about the influence of motherhood on women's identity, the process of constructing a new identity involves three main themes: self-loss, a fracturing of identities, and redefinition. Another previous research suggested two significant directions for studying online mothering communities: (1) the importance of examining underlying communication processes and (2) understanding the role online community plays in the lives of new mothers (Gattoni, 2013). That previous research has a background of American and European mothers, none of the earlier studies have discussed Indonesian mothers. Meanwhile, the mothers on this research are Indonesians and to be precise, mothers living in a suburban city. Based on earlier researchers, this research aims to further explore how the communication process of identity construction between mothers who are members of online community as well as to understand the role of community in the lives of mothers.

From a relational constructivist standpoint, the identity construction process is relational. A human defines him- or herself based on meanings constructed employing relationships with others in an intersubjective way (Pérez, 2016). In line with that, Berger and Luckman noted that institutions of society are created and preserved or transformed by human action and interaction. To examine mothers' identity, researchers employed the symbolic theory of interactionism. The creation of identity comes from

the symbolic process of interactionism: (1) humans act on the meaning of things for them (meaning) (2) it is derived from social interaction with others (language); (3) such meanings are enhanced when the process of social interaction is taking place (thinking). (Griffin, 2011).

Earlier research by Gattoni (2013) quoted Adelman & Frey (1997) that defines a [1] community as "…a social construction, grounded in symbolic meanings and communicative practices of individuals that fosters meaningful human interdependence in social aggregates". Looking at the community in this way acknowledges the role that communication plays in forming and sustaining the community. Further Gattoni (2013) also quoted Barnes (2003) [1] that defines virtual communities as communities that "…generally come together through the sharing of mutual interests, instead of geographic proximity…"

The past study indicated that online mothering websites serve as a virtual community [1] for women to come together to share information and ideas as well as a place for sharing emotion and seeking support (Drentea & Moren Cross, 2011). [1] Online communities provide a promising avenue for new mothers to reach other mothers to receive the critical information and support needed during the transition to motherhood. Online pregnancy and mothering groups are characterized by both supportive communication and their ability to provide embodied knowledge.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a constructive paradigm foundation that ontologically places reality as a circular reality (Patton, 2002b). It means that mothers' identity is something built together by the members of the community. The data collection technique used is (1) interview with founder and content creators; (2) observation of @haloibuid content and comment from the members of the community; (3) observation during @haloibuid live event. This research was conducted in 2019 and the informants of this research are the founder and content creators of the community. The background of that choice is because all of them serve the community for the longest period, play the most role

in the community, spends plenty of time together, and are capable of giving information on the dynamic changes in their identity. All of the informants will be mentioned by using their initial name: AD as the founder, SZ, and MA both as the content creators and the community coordinators.

The aspects that will be explored in the interview are how the three themes of construction of mothers' new identity namely self-loss, fracturing identity, and redefinition according to past research by Laney, et al. (2015) that are being communicated by members of the online community, as well as the role of community in helping the identity transition process of the mothers (Gattoni, 2013). The communication process will be analyzed through the lenses of social reality construction and symbolic interaction theory.

Data processing uses the eclectic analysis method which means the result will be adjusted by the condition, the need of invention, and the exploration through qualitative data process gathered from the field (Creswel, 2007). In this research, the interview transcripts and report on observation will be coded and classified on information, the building of theme and sub-theme or interesting and significant topic, and then reduction of data and build a comprehensive understanding (Hennink, 2011) (Patton, 2002a).

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The communication process of constructing mothers' new identity

Self-loss

Laney, et al (2015) noted that in the process of becoming a mother, women experienced a sense of self-loss while they also developed a motherhood identity. All of the informants on this research experience the same way. First, AD is the founder of 'Halo Ibu' community. Having premarital pregnancy, AD felt a sudden change in her life when she gave birth to her first daughter. Here is what she expressed:

> "I was a journalist, it can't be separated from my identity. Once I am pregnant I quit as a journalist. Well, I used to be a woman who is busy, energetic, and

> *has fans everywhere, let say I always have my community, I always have someone to be with because I'm an extrovert but once I have a child, I just stay at home...I feel like I do not know who I am when I look at the mirror"*

From what she said AD indicated the self-loss she first felt. She described her "old-self" as a woman who is a journalist with many activities, has fans everywhere, and has her community and all of those parts of identity is gone when she became a mother who has to stay at home with her child. Another informant, SZ also felt similar:

> *"At the beginning of my pregnancy, I quit my job... I can't leave my child with other people, I just can't do that. But I also don't want to be just a stay-at-home mom...There's nothing I can do. I want something else to do too."*

While still struggling with her feeling of self-loss, AD started to write blogs and interview mothers about their feeling as mothers. The interviews are being uploaded to YouTube and then she created a live event called "Lingkaran Ibu" by Halo Ibu. It is a place for mothers to share their experiences, mostly about the struggle they face when they become mothers.

From this event too, SZ and MA knew and later joined the community. "Lingkaran Ibu" as an event has built special meaning for informants in the process of constructing their identity. The interaction between mothers who took place on the event brings a sense of togetherness and happy feeling as well as provide the emotional support they need in their transition to motherhood as expressed by the three informants below:

> *"When women support each other, their love to each other is amazing, I see and feel the great feminine power during this circle."(AD)*

> *"Once I return from this event, wow crazy...I felt so enlightened. This circle is so useful and comfortable, I feel like I want to stay on this circle forever". (SZ)*

> *"This circle has magical power for women, to finally be heard, supported and understood. The positive vibes are awesome. Now I believe that what women need is just a space to be heard" (MA)*

All women reflected that "Lingkaran Ibu" has created a safe space for all of them to express their true emotions without feeling afraid of being judged. When a mother

shared her story, the other mothers were listening silently and at the end, they gave supportive encouragement words or gestures to a mother who just finished telling her story. The constructing meaning of self-love, self-awareness, and non-judgmental support was created through the interaction during this circle. Later on, this becomes the basic anchor for women to discover their new identity as a mother.

As the community grows, they created more content on motherhood on Instagram (@haloibuid). The contents they post create a conversation between members of this community.

> "When we create content and mothers were thanking us, I felt honored to be able to do that. To listen to other women's stories, I know that everyone has their struggles. This makes me less judging towards others (SZ)

> "I feel sad to listen to these mothers stories. They all need a space and media to express their feeling, to tell stories of their own, without being judged." (MA)

These mothers' responses showed the internalization – externalization – objectivation process of Identity by constructing the meaning of Self and Mother (I/Me) through the comparison of other mothers' stories being shared on the community social media. One informant feels happy when she gets positive feedback from other mothers and by learning from other mothers' experiences, she found herself become more understanding and more compassionate toward herself and others. Another informant acknowledges mothers' need to have space to share their stories and channel to express their emotions.

The communication that took place in the community become an answer to respond to women's restlessness during the transition to motherhood. In this case, it happens simultaneously between the content creators and community coordinator, and the rest of the members. These findings are under past research conducted by (Madge & O'Connor, 2006) which argued that online communities provide value for new mothers because it provides them with a safe space to learn to cope with their new experiences as well as access to alternative information sources.

Fracturing identities

Laney, et al. (2015) wrote that [2] when women experience a sense of self-loss concurrently with an expanded consciousness, women incorporate their children into the boundaries of themselves. The self-loss creates space within women's identities for another person, and the expanded consciousness envelops women's children into their constant awareness. Thereby, women identify with and to some degree become defined by their children, thus allowing women to incorporate their children into the boundaries of their selves. This process is also experienced by the three informants. First, AD feels that one of the challenges of being a mother is having to adjust her needs to the needs of her child. For example, when she wants to meet with her old friends.

> *"It was a challenge for me to meet my old friends it's impossible because they don't bring kids, it's just me who bring a kid,"* (AD)

Not only for the need to mingle with her friends that require some adjustments, but her commitment to 'Halo Ibu' community also relies on the developmental phase of her children like what she said below:

> *"I just have a baby, and I don't need to rush. and that's also my message to other mothers too, no need to rush. everything must follow my family phase. If it is in the form of the community, nature will be more relaxed"*(AD)

As for another informant, having a child means that she has to leave her previous job because she cannot leave her child at home being taken care of by other people. However, that decision somehow brings frustration to her for she never feels enough by just being a housewife.

> *"I can't accept if I'm just staying at home. I want to work.. work... but can't leave my child at home. I feel I am not proud of myself if I don't do anything. So I have to prove myself that way, I never feel enough."* (SZ)

One informant reported that her self-confidence went down because she feels like she has limited parenting knowledge and finds it hard to control her emotions when dealing with her children.

> *"Since being a mother, my self-confidence dropped, because the only thing I know it's just breastfeeding. But when it comes to parenting, it is different. That emotional conflict is the heaviest challenge, how to communicate right to my kids, that's the biggest problem"*(MA)

From all of the informants, it can be said that their new identity as a mother is heavily engaged and defined by the wellbeing of their children. They struggle to find ways to juggle the shift of their old identity into something new to fulfill the needs of their children and create a balance peaceful state of mind.

The founder of the community (AD) modifies the way she expressed her interest and skills of journalism into creating digital content and offline event in a form of community to provide space for mothers who feel the same way. One informant (SZ) explored her other interest that shows her expertise yet can still be done at home, other than that she joined 'Halo Ibu' community to try to find a way to deal with her frustration. Another informant (MA) once feels very low in self-confidence as she entered motherhood with very limited parenting knowledge therefore, she joined communities (Halo Ibu being one of them) to equip herself with a better understanding of how to parent her child.

Birthing experience and role of "Doula"

Past research noted that support for expectant and new mothers continues to focus either on labor and delivery or the physical health of mother and baby but fails to prepare women for the reality of new motherhood. Because of this lack of attention to the women themselves in the months following delivery, the needs of new mothers continue to remain largely unmet (Nelson, 2003).

As if to fill in the gap of the unmet new mothers' need, there is a new profession called "Doula" (a woman partner whose main job is to provide knowledge, emotional and physical support before, during, and after the birth). Following that, one interesting finding on this study is that, aside from these women's involvement in the community, their experience of giving birth assisted by Doula also marked an important milestone on being at peace with their motherhood transition.

For two informants, their involvement in the community has led them to get to know "Doula" (a woman who is being an emotional supporter for other women before, during,

and after birth). While another informant, AD has experienced a relationship with a doula earlier even before she started the community.

> "Since I have premarital pregnancy, my mother and in-laws were angry at me, that is why I didn't get the kind of support I need. I started to search for information online then I found about Ibu Robin Lim. She is a midwife and doula. She supported me emotionally, whole-heartedly. From here, I understand that this is the kind of support that all women should have when they are giving birth. Once I read that if you want to make a change in this world, it should start from birth, from the mother"."(AD)

In turn, her positive experience with her Doula is what triggered AD to create 'Halo Ibu' community. Once she set up the community, she also took training to become a doula herself. She wanted every mother to feel supported and well informed about all of the changes they are going through when they become a mother.

Another informant has another story, SZ decided to use a doula service on her second childbirth (after she joined Halo Ibu). Her Doula helped her to release negative emotions before she giving birth by asking her to write the qualities she likes the most about herself. After a long talk with her Doula, finally, SZ knew that the issue she was having is self-worth. Below is her experience:

> "Start from 'Child Birth Education, and we meet to release all of my emotions before birth. My doula, Miss Imu, told me to write down all the good qualities I have, and I suddenly cry because I did not know what my good qualities are...(SZ)

From this interaction with her Doula, SZ understood she still holds on to her anger as a child. She was being snapped at many times by her parents that in turn influence her self-worth. Not only her Doula, but SZ also find that her doctor was very understanding and gentle during her delivery process. She felt honored, respected, and given fair options during the process.

The same experience also happened to MA. Once she knew 'Halo Ibu' community, she decided to use a Doula to give birth to her third child. AD herself was a Doula for MA. Before birth she was asked by the doula who she allowed to accompany her

during giving birth, MA also learned to communicate with her baby to ease her pain and after giving birth she was asked about her feelings, who is allowed to visit, and when she is ready to welcome people.

> "So I feel like I'm asked how about my feelings, and who I want to be with while I am giving birth, who I want to see after I give birth. So I said, I only want to be accompanied by my husband during birth and I don't want anyone to see me right away after giving birth, give me 1-2 weeks (MA)

From these women's birth stories, the communication carried out by the Doula makes them feel seen, taken care of, supported, understood, and respected. The doula even helped to dig negative emotions the mothers' carried within herself to be released before birth. Through interpersonal communication with the Doula, these women did self-disclosure. These mothers are encouraged to voice what they feel, want, and need during and after giving birth. The meaning of dignity and empowered feeling are being built during their interaction with the Doula. This way, their transition to motherhood has started with a smooth beginning and later on brings a better outcome for their identity discovery.

Redefinition of identity

As women began to feel that they were "coming back" to themselves, they began to redefine who they were as individuals Laney, et al (2015). The communication process they experience during their involvement in the community has brought them to the place where they can incorporate their motherhood into their own identity as a person. Three of them reflected all of their positive feeling below.

> "My new identity is being discovered slowly. Like the first time I took a yoga course was because of AD. She kept encouraging me by asking what do I want, what lies beneath my unconsciousness. What is your goal? Who do you want to be? I used to be confused with those questions but now, bit by bit I start to follow my path" (MA)

> "Being successful could be having a lot of money, but having your heart full and I can have my baby with me, being a mother and a wife. I'm not the richest girl in the world but my heart is full" (AD)

> *"I'm done with the motherhood issue. Finally, after I have my second child, I'm cured. I find myself again... I do not know if being a mother change you that much. I feel like I am a different person now. But I like myself better, the version of me after I join 'Halo Ibu'". (SZ)*

Earlier research noted that theorists have claimed that identity is developed in the context of relationships and that women, in particular, tend to view themselves within webs of relationships that help define who they are Laney, Et Al (2015). From these women's answers it can be concluded that they have evolved from the point they felt the self-loss, fracturing identities, and finally, get into the redefinition of self. Through the communication and relationship with members of the community, they began to make sense of the transition of motherhood. Furthermore, they also have incorporated their children in the discovery process of their new identity by finding a meaningful thing to do to keep them being a person of their own yet still manage to be the primary caretaker of their children.

The role of Halo Ibu community in transition to motherhood

Drentea & Moren Cross (2011) wrote that online communities provide a promising avenue for new mothers to reach other mothers to receive the critical information and support needed during the transition to motherhood. This also happens to 'Halo Ibu' community: the existence of community has become a great support for these women. From researcher observation, even if the community first exists in the digital world, the mothers you meet online can further continue to be met offline As community founder, AD compared her contrast experience on her second child to her first.

> *"Well, my experience with the second kid was awesome, now that I've had Halo Ibu community, the attention and support were amazing. I have got someone to drive me, brought me food, asked me "how are you doing?" checking in me like "What can I help you?" Those simple gestures warm my heart. We will never have that if we don't have community"(AD)*

Past research by Madge & O'Connor (2006) examined the importance of online community for new mothers. Their study suggested the importance of online community as a place to exchange informal knowledge, building a base that allows for improving women's knowledge about mothering. In this case, the other two informants agreed that other than emotional support, knowledge is the benefits they get once they become a member of the community:

> *"I'm glad of my present self rather than my old self before joining Halo Ibu. I have learned to appreciate myself better." (SZ)*

> *"Yeah, now I know what transition of motherhood is, I understand that the changing hormones are what makes mothers' emotions mixed up after birth. Aside from that, the most important lesson I learn from Halo Ibu is about self-love, that mothers should be able to love themselves unconditionally before they give their love to children"* (MA)

Not only that, but MA also said that her communication with her husband is getting better after she joined the community. She can express what she wants more clearly so her husband can understand her better. Both SZ and MA said that the main message they get from the community is the importance of self-love and self-respect. According to them with self-love and self-respect mothers can be at peace with themselves and in turn can make them happy and enjoy their role better. This is in line with what described by AD below:

> *"I want all mothers to understand how important it is for them to help each other, to hear each other out. and give judgemental support otherwise if this mother is not happy then how can we raise happy children?"*(AD)

AD also explained further the main purpose of this community as follows:

> *"After being a mother, the woman had physically changed, psychologically she was changed, too, she became a different woman, she likes different things, she needs different things. We are changing as a woman, and no one is talking about this. I think every hospital in Indonesia should have this if you become a mother this is how you're going to feel"*(AD)

She felt that this motherhood transition has not been talked about much in Indonesia. While according to her some other countries like Australia and Netherland have this motherhood centre to help new mothers coping with their new situation. AD highlighted women need to be educated, supported, and comforted during this rough transition. Those are the reason why the motherhood community existence is very much needed nowadays.

The importance of self-awareness, self-love and non-judgemental support are presented both online and in face-to-face interactions. The contents of 'Halo Ibu' are displayed on their Instagram account @haloibuid. Informant SZ reflected that during the process of content making she feel reminded of the values she needs to hold to navigate her motherhood journey. She also feels esteemed knowing that she creates something

worthy to her fellow mothers. Below are some of the examples of Halo Ibu community Instagram posts:

Figure 1: Post Halo Ibu Community

Post 1   Post 2   Post 3

Source: *Halo Ibu Instagram* (https://www.instagram.com/haloibuid/)

As we can see from the example of the content above, they all voice the real problems that mothers are dealing. Post 1 talks about mothers' identity crisis and tries to normalize this experience to its followers. Post 2 is a video about tips on what to say when you visit a postpartum mother. Post 3 is a video about mothers' honest feelings when being accused that housewife is doing nothing at home. The community's Instagram content mainly talks about motherhood issues, sometimes they put it in a serious tone while at other points they do it in a light humorous way. Comments from mothers are various. At times, most feel relate to the content, sometimes some comments are not in line with the community's spirit.

Interpretation

From the stories of these mothers, the communication process that took place in constructing their identity happened during the process of building 'Halo Ibu' community. For the founder, she started first during her birthing experience with Doula. This Doula has become a significant other for the founder. When she felt confused and alone, she found support and comfort from her Doula. That particular point inspired her to

create a community of mothers so there will be no other mother feeling as confused and alone as she was.

Looking from interactionism symbolic theory, here founder acted on the meaning of a thing. She found the meaning of self-love, self-awareness, and non-judgemental support from her interaction with her Doula. Those particular values are further enhanced by the process of social interaction with a community member, making them the core values of the community.

Along with that process, there has been internalization, externalization, and objectivation of these core values that lead community members to discover their identity after motherhood and make peace with all the changes in their life. In this case, the community founder has become a significant other who played a tremendous part in introducing these values to the member of the community. These findings are in line with the past research's result that said midwives, mothers, and other women within social networks guided the process of childbirth as well as maternal health (Drentea & Moren Cross, 2011). This study also showed that once women are given back their power and control over their birthing process as guided by other women (Doula), they would feel seen, respected, and understood. These positive feelings are important for mothers during the transition to motherhood and the identity discovery process.

While Drentea & Moren Cross's (2011) result focuses on three main types of communication emerge from their analysis of a mothering board on a parent's website and creation and maintenance of social capital, this research result presents both face-to-face and online communication process between members of the community. This research also looked at the communication process from interactionism symbolic theory rather than social capital theory.

All of the women in this study experienced the three phases of constructing mother identity proposed by Laney, Et Al (2015), which are self-loss, fracturing identities, and redefinition of self. These processes are not always in line; sometimes they are circular. This phase usually starts again when the woman gives birth. As to what happened to women in this study. After giving birth they experience self-loss. To find ways of what

they are feeling they search for information online. There they found about the existence of 'Halo Ibu' community. While for the founder, she got information about Doula before she builds the community.

As the process of fracturing identities takes place, these women struggle to fill in space in themselves by incorporating the existence of their children. Here the community become a safe space for women to share their ups and down experience through their offline event "Lingkaran Ibu" and their social media content. The social interaction that took place between mothers who are members of this community help them to reach the redefinition of their new self.

The difference between this research and the past research by Laney, Et Al (2015) aside of the different cultural and demographic background of mothers, is that the dynamic process of constructing an identity for mother on this study focus more at mothers' involvement in the community rather than mothers' relationship with their child. Therefore, this research discussed the communication process between members of the community and how it led the women to find redefinition of their identity once they become a mother.

Other earlier research by Gattoni (2013) suggested [1] that new mothers use online communities to communicate about challenges around the transition to motherhood, highlighting tensions around (a) expertise and experience, (b) mother-led and baby-led practices, and (c) expectations and experience. While on this research, mothers use an online community to communicate about their inner struggle experience and get information to navigate them during the transition to motherhood and discover their new identity. The values of self-awareness, self-love and non-judgemental support were being internalized, externalized, and objectivated during the phases of self-loss, fracturing identities, and redefinition among mothers of 'Halo Ibu' community. Below is the summary figure of the process of constructing mothers' identities in the online community.

Self-loss – Fracturing
identities - Redefinition

Figure 2: Process of Constructing Mother's Identity in Online Community
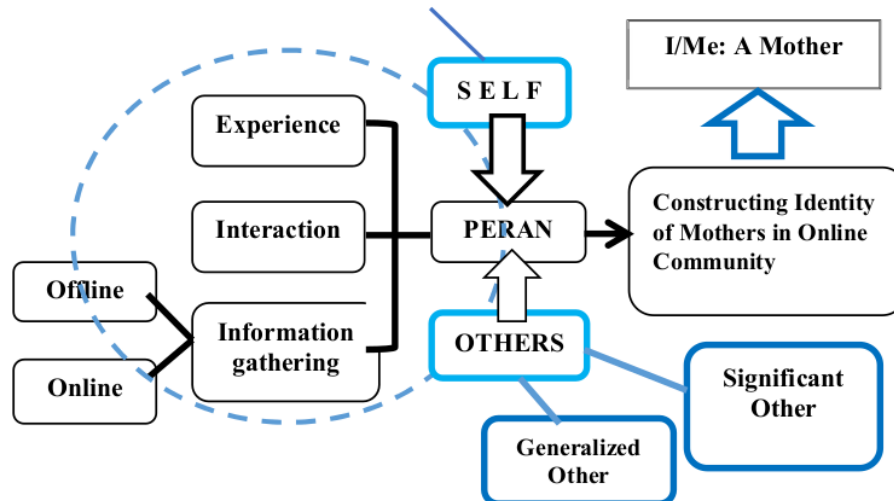
Process of constructing mothers' identity in online community

CONCLUSION

1. The communication process of mother identity construction happened in a simultaneous dialectical process of internalization, objectivation, and externalization of community values (self-love, self-awareness, and non-judgmental support) during the phases of self-loss, fracturing identity, and redefinition of self.

2. The construction of reality regarding community and identity concepts is based on experiences, interactions, and information search by individuals both online and offline.

3. Halo Ibu community serves a great role in the motherhood transition process as it provides a safe place for emotional support and knowledge. Given this, women of all walk of life need to get access to this kind of community to support them during the postpartum period.

4. There are interesting findings of this research that needs to be explored further namely the role of Doula in empowering mothers and digital content of the motherhood community.

LIMITATIONS & STUDY FORWARD

This study focuses only about identity construction of mothers who are actively engaged in community's activity as they are all founder, community coordinator dan content creator of community's social media. All of mothers in this research also lives in the same town Meanwhile members of Halo Ibu community are all over Indonesia. Therefore, further research can expand this research to mothers from all other cities in Indonesia and to mothers who do not have any specific job-desk at community. Based on the findings of this research, there are things needs to be explored further namely the role of Doula in empowering mothers and digital content of motherhood community Aside than that, other downside situations happened during transition to motherhood such as breastfeeding experience, body image issue and work-family conflict are also interesting topic to discuss within communication and community framework.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Adopted and Nonadopted Women", Journal of
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