



Collective Compensatory Identity Construction of Roblox Teenagers in the High-Density Settlement of Pekojan, West Jakarta

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Abstract

Background: Population density and the scarcity of physical play areas compel teenagers to seek alternative social spaces through digital platforms. In this context, Roblox functions not merely as an entertainment medium, but has evolved into a virtual interaction space that enables adolescents to construct and express their social identities.

Aims: This study aims to analyze the formation of virtual social identities among teenage Roblox players in Pekojan Village, West Jakarta, focusing on the role of Collective Compensatory Identity in responding to the limitations of social space in the physical environment.

Methods: The study employs a qualitative approach through the framework of Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory, alongside the concepts of player embodiment and spatial presence. The analysis centers on teenagers' experiences in utilizing avatars, interacting with other players, and forming group identities within the virtual space of Roblox.

Results: The findings demonstrate that Roblox functions as a virtual social space that compensates for the limitations of physical play areas. The formation of virtual social identity manifests through three primary dimensions: socio-spatial compensation, the establishment of subcultural solidarity through the use of distinct slang and emotes, and tactical adaptation via account adjustments to navigate the platform's age-restriction regulations.

Conclusion: The study concludes that Roblox serves not merely as a gaming space, but as an alternative environment for adolescents to construct identity, solidarity, and a sense of belonging. A Collective Compensatory Identity is forged through the interplay of avatar representation, social interaction, and adaptive strategies responding to both physical spatial constraints and platform rules.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence represents a crucial phase when individuals actively construct their self-identity while simultaneously responding to social acceptance with heightened sensitivity. The advancement of the digital era has shifted this arena of self-seeking from the physical realm into the virtual ecosystem through the utilization of interactive media platforms and online landscapes. This new environment plays a major role in facilitating young people to negotiate and project their self-representation extensively (Yunanto & Harischandra, 2023). Contemporary leaps in communication technology have successfully expanded the initial function of message exchange (Mulyana, 2021) into a fresh social space that dictates the behaviors, interaction patterns, and collective consciousness of the current generation (Hidir & Rahman, 2025). The dynamics of cyber interactions also carry psychosocial consequences, such as the potential emergence of risky behaviors that demand environmental supervision and the strengthening of familial roles (Fatoni et al., 2020). Excessive

online gaming intensity further demonstrates a close correlation with the stability of adolescents' self-identity (Khatimah et al., 2023).

Limitations in physical spaces within densely populated urban areas have triggered a massive shift in the social activities of youth in Pekojan Village, Tambora District, West Jakarta, toward virtual ecosystems. Sectoral publications by Statistics Indonesia (BPS) record the population density of the Tambora region reaching 550,951 residents per square kilometer, while Pekojan accommodates approximately 30,000 individuals per km² within a total area of just 0.78 km². Governor Regulation of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Number 33 of 2024 confirms these structural issues by designating Pekojan as a slum cluster due to multi-family high-density housing that lacks adequate sanitation facilities and green open spaces. The scarcity of public amenities such as Child-Friendly Integrated Public Spaces (RPTRA) narrows physical mobility while restricting young residents' access to safe, real-world recreational areas (Kompas, 2023). An urban planner from Universitas Indonesia identifies this spatial decline as a symptom of past development paradigms that prioritized modern business districts while ignoring historical coastal blueprints. This empirical reality positions the digital realm as a crucial substitute for public space among local youth. Urban sociology views interactive platforms as a virtual "third space" supporting social cohesion and serving as a gathering venue to circumvent geographic constraints (Eshet-Alkalai, 2004; Putri et al., 2026).

This study posits that Roblox holds high research relevance among Indonesian youth, despite not being the top online game by total national player volume. According to the Indonesian Gaming Behaviour 2025 report published by Jakpat comprising 590 respondents across Generation Z and Millennials Roblox ranks as the third most popular platform at 28%, positioned just behind Mobile Legends: Bang Bang (52%) and Candy Crush (30%), while outperforming PUBG (27%) and Free Fire (23%) (Setiawan & Astuti, 2026).

and Minecraft at 17% (GoodStats, 2025). This strategic position stems from the unique characteristics of Roblox as a social sandbox medium, which prioritizes digital persona customization, communal relationships, and user-generated virtual spaces over the competitive combat genres characteristic of its peers, thereby exerting a significant influence on the reconstruction of adolescent identity. The platform's global penetration demonstrated remarkable figures throughout the year, mobilizing 151.5 million active users who spent a cumulative duration of 88.7 billion hours, averaging 2.8 hours per individual daily; indeed, Vice President Raj Bhatia emphasized Generation Alpha's strong attachment to this primary cyber ecosystem as a vehicle for their daily cultural self-actualization (Kontan, 2025). Together, these empirical articulations provide a solid rationale for selecting this specific platform over other entertainment options to underpin an in-depth examination of youth sociological transformation in the Pekojan area (Durry et al., 2026; Insyira & Zulfikasari, 2025).

Roblox dominates the digital platform preferences of Pekojan youth by offering a sandbox ecosystem that grants complete user creativity. Its User-Generated Content features and limitless customization options enable players to design independent personas and determine their sociological roles across various community servers, rather than relying on default system avatars. These adaptive characteristics transform the platform into a dynamic arena for social expression and self-actualization, moving far beyond mere conventional entertainment (Mariati & Salim, 2026). Adolescents' intensive engagement with this virtual universe stems from psychological drives to fulfill needs for peer acceptance and to mitigate interpersonal anxieties caused by the spatial limitations of their physical living environment (Gupta & Sharma, 2021; Namah et al., 2026). Communicative activities within this ecosystem manifest as a symbolic interaction process, involving the exchange of cyber symbols and codes to co-construct shared meaning among players (Mulyana, 2021). This phenomenon underscores the platform's crucial function as an evolving site for identity negotiation.

To better understand this phenomenon, the study focuses on a key form of identity construction: collective compensatory virtual social identity. This concept refers to how adolescents use digital self-representation to compensate for physical limitations and their social status in the real world, while also strengthening their identity through solidarity within online subcultural groups. This form of identity construction involves three main dimensions: compensatory visual self-presentation, the use of shared language and group norms that foster a sense of belonging, and strategic adaptation to platform regulations. The field observations focused on several indicators, including the visual

elements chosen for avatars, the use of localized slang, the frequency of group interactions, and routine changes made to users' account profiles (Azzahra et al., 2026; Loise & Syukur, 2025).

Hyperpersonal communication facilitates the formation of a collective compensatory identity within the virtual third space through selective self-presentation, impression management, and the idealization of target digital communities (Walther, 1996). This interactive process helps adolescents project their idealized images through the use of avatar characters and curated text messages. Positive acceptance and feedback from the cyber group, reinforce this projected image until it crystallizes into an alternative persona that players deeply embody. The dimensions of player embodiment and spatial presence further accentuate this experience of self-existential reconstruction within the Roblox ecosystem (Azzahra et al., 2026). A heightened sense of oneness with their digital avatars, coupled with the realistic perception of the synthetic environment, fosters deep commitment among youth toward the social roles they portray. Prior research by Istikhomah et al. (2026) Previous research was limited to examining communication patterns and identity reconstruction among Generation Z in Jakarta while using Roblox in a general context. However, it did not fully explore the relationship between online interactions and the real-world spatial limitations experienced by young people living in the densely populated Pekojan area. This study addresses this gap by examining how urban spatial constraints encourage adolescents to develop a collective compensatory identity as a way of expressing and fulfilling communal needs that may be difficult to achieve in their physical surroundings. The novelty of this study lies in connecting the concept of hyperpersonal communication with the urban spatial context, while also considering the age-restriction policies introduced by the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs (Komdigi). Through a spatial sociology perspective, this study explores how adolescents develop alternative identities in online spaces and how they adapt their behavior to government policies regarding age restrictions.

Theoretical Framework: Social Identity Theory

This study uses Social Identity Theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1979), as the main conceptual framework for interpreting the field findings. The theory explains that an individual's self-concept is shaped by two interconnected dimensions: personal identity and social identity, which develops through a person's involvement in particular social groups. From this perspective, social identity is formed through three related cognitive processes. The first is social categorization, in which individuals classify themselves and others into particular groups. The second is social identification, where individuals begin to adopt the values, characteristics, and behaviors associated with the group they identify with. The third is social comparison, through which individuals compare their own group with other groups in ways that can strengthen a sense of belonging and collective self-esteem. This study applies the theoretical framework to understand how adolescents in Pekojan categorize themselves as members of particular Roblox communities, including Brookhaven enthusiasts and other role-playing groups. As they become part of these communities, they tend to adopt shared visual styles, language, and behavioral norms. They may also make positive comparisons between their own group and outsiders, which helps strengthen their sense of belonging and social recognition something that may be more difficult to achieve because of the spatial limitations of their residential environment. Santrock's (2024) developmental stage framework is used as a complementary perspective to understand the psychosocial characteristics of adolescents. It is not treated as the main theoretical basis, but rather as an additional lens for interpreting how young people experience and respond to their social environment.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive case study design to examine in depth the subjective meanings, spatial experiences, and sociological dynamics underlying the crystallization of collective compensatory identity among Pekojan adolescents within the Roblox ecosystem (Sugiyono, 2022). The observational focus is geographically centered in Pekojan Village, Tambora District, West Jakarta, representing a high-density urban area experiencing a severe scarcity of physical play areas and green open spaces. Participant recruitment operated through a purposive sampling technique based on strict parameters to ensure the accuracy and relevance of

the field data. The screening criteria encompassed early to middle adolescence stage ages ranging from 12 to 18 years, permanent residency within the local administrative area, habitual platform access of at least two hours daily, and active membership in an in-game group for at least the past six months. This selection formulation successfully recruited three primary subjects meeting these representative criteria, alongside two parents as supporting informants to corroborate and validate the children's daily routines within their physical environment.

The data collection techniques in this study were conducted systematically to ensure the credibility of all field findings. The investigation combined semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted both through direct face-to-face meetings in Pekojan and via voice chat channels on the Discord application. Supporting measures involved passive participant observation on the Roblox platform to observe textual language tendencies, audio feature utilization, nonverbal movements (emotes), and group cohesion within role-playing servers and social spaces. Document analysis supplemented the fact-finding process through the collection of screenshots displaying the informants' digital persona modifications, written chat room transcripts, and demographic files from Pekojan Village.

Data analysis was conducted following the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman (as cited in Sugiyono, 2022). This analytical process involves data reduction to classify raw information obtained from interviews and observations into specific identity dimension clusters. The subsequent step presents the findings through a coherent analytical narrative description leading toward conclusion drawing. Data trustworthiness was maintained using source triangulation by cross-checking the statements of adolescent informants against the testimonies of their parents. Finally, technical triangulation was applied by confronting direct interview results with the observational findings of the subjects' real behaviors within the Roblox game.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study demonstrates that the construction of a collective compensatory identity among Roblox adolescents in Pekojan Village unfolds through the unique experiences of each subject. Their activities within the digital realm present a sharp contrast to their original psychosocial characteristics in the physical world. The following section presents in depth empirical findings from the three primary informants, organized systematically (Hidayah et al., 2026; Sulistyowati & Widiantoro, 2026).

The first informant, Iki (13 years old), a junior high school student, displays a highly reserved, introverted personality and rarely speaks in his real-world physical neighborhood. He resides in a narrow alley within a high-density residential area in Pekojan, where the proximity between buildings is extremely tight, leading him to lament the loss of physical freedom to play soccer freely. Conversely, he has been highly active on Roblox since 2019, spending an average of two hours daily across combat servers, gardening simulations, and survival games. In stark contrast to his introverted nature, Iki devotes significant attention to the visual customization of his virtual persona to appear like an older, masculine high school student. He also purchases premium digital clothing using the platform's Robux currency to avoid marginalizing labels such as being called a "noob" or "bacon hair." Due to chat filter restrictions on the platform, Iki tactically adapts by moving group communications to WhatsApp (Nurfadila & Nurmaning, 2026; Suryaputri & Granita, 2026). This digital exploration affords him full freedom to alter his appearance at will, effectively eliminating visual bullying amidst his highly constrained home environment (Interview, May 25, 2026). Parental confirmation verified that these cyber activities have boosted Iki's confidence and social skills, although he becomes so engrossed that he grows less responsive to calls at home (Interview, May 26, 2026).

The second informant, Alka (15 years old), exhibits a highly passive demeanor at home and tends to isolate himself in his bedroom after school due to a lack of compatible peers in his densely populated, noisy, and cramped physical neighborhood. Within the Roblox platform, this adolescent channelizes all his gaming energy into popular role-playing servers such as Brookhaven. This virtual space facilitates the subject in taking on an active role as an authoritative, wealthy head of a family. Alka designs independent virtual storylines while driving digital luxury sports cars, occupying three-

story houses secured with game-specific locking systems, and leading text and voice communications with other clan members (Febriyanti & Hastuti, 2026). This social agent revealed that his reluctance to interact in the real world is immediately compensated upon entering Brookhaven, where he portrays an influential, wealthy father figure possessing abundant assets who commands full respect from his community (Interview, May 25, 2026). This phenomenon demonstrates a clear role shift from a passive social condition in empirical reality to an authoritative persona in the cyber realm to attain complete self-agency.

The third informant, Rayhan (12 years old), possesses a highly active and expressive character with a tight-knit physical friendship network among neighbors in his local neighborhood unit (RT) in Pekojan Village. The total absence of adequate recreational facilities in empirical reality prompted this adolescent to actively coordinate his local peers to relocate their gathering space to Roblox's virtual third space starting at age 10. The subject maintains high playing frequency, ranging from one to two hours on school days and surging to three to four hours during holidays. Rayhan serves as the leader of a fixed gaming squad comprising his real-world peers who regularly meet in-game (Mulyana et al., 2026). This communal circle established internal regulations mandating matching black-and-white themed costumes, the adoption of platform subcultural coded language, and synchronized avatar emotes to solidify clan solidarity. When the developer's age-restriction system implemented stricter rules, Rayhan took tactical measures by instructing his squad members to adjust their account data so their group would remain connected without being fractured (Interview, May 25, 2026). Source triangulation with parents confirmed the child's deeply rooted emotional attachment to his virtual play circle at times leading him to skip meals and affecting his psychological stability which prompted parental consensus on the necessity of periodic supervision (Interview, February 19, 2026).

Discussion

The presentation of field data regarding the profiles of the aforementioned informants demonstrates a tight coupling between physical spatial constraints in the real world and their digital behavior tendencies. This analytical section deconstructs the depth of this phenomenon thematically, anchored in the dimensions of collective compensatory identity to provide a comprehensive understanding. The initial discussion focuses on the most fundamental structural factors within the subjects' residential area to unravel the root of the problem systematically (Asnaedi et al., 2025).

Physical Spatial Constraints and the Migration to Virtual Space

The geospatial constraints of Pekojan Village characterized by high population density and a scarcity of green open zones have driven local youth to migrate their communal interactions into the digital universe on a massive scale. Extreme residential density, reaching 30,000 residents per km² locally and 550,000 residents per km² sectorally, combined with its official classification as a slum cluster under Governor Regulation of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Number 33 of 2024, significantly restricts adolescents' physical mobility. Informant Iki's narrative regarding narrow alleys, alongside Rayhan's grievances about the total absence of proper playing fields, confirms the stark reality of this spatial environment. This sociological phenomenon demonstrates that Pekojan youth adopt the Roblox ecosystem as a virtual "third space" that substitutes for the physical open spaces stripped from their living environment (Huttu et al., 2026; Rismawan et al., 2026).



Figure 1. Pekojan Environment



Figure 2. Pekojan Environment

These virtual server ecosystems offer spatial freedom that remains impossible to achieve in the real world, such as gathering with peers in artificial parks or independently designing dream residences. Adolescents leverage Roblox to satisfy social needs specifically group recognition that is obstructed in their physical environment by bypassing physical territorial limits through dynamic digital expansion. This field evidence reinforces the thesis of [Kahayani et al. \(2025\)](#), which asserts that contemporary interactive media have evolved beyond mere entertainment instruments into a favored new social space for the younger generation to alleviate daily communal alienation. The Pekojan youth's preference for this sandbox environment further underscores the strategic positioning of Roblox as one of the most popular online games at the national level.

Avatars as a Means of Identity Compensation

The dynamics of visual customization by informant Iki and role portrayal by Alka demonstrate the operation of hyperpersonal communication mechanisms within digital platforms ([Walther, 1996](#)). Through this computer-mediated ecosystem, Pekojan youth engage in selective self-presentation and optimize impression management by editing digital character appearances to project an idealized self-image. Iki's deliberate effort to engineer his visual representation to resemble a stylish high school student constitutes a conscious attempt to construct a new social status while avoiding marginalizing labels such as "noob" or "bacon hair". Meanwhile, Alka's portrayal of a wealthy head of household on the Brookhaven server serves as a compensatory instrument for his lack of personal autonomy in real-life settings. Theoretically, these active agency measures represent the compensatory dimension of alternative identity formation, wherein cyber figures act as projections of the player's ideal ego to navigate constraints on their physical agency ([Huttu et al., 2026](#); [Rismawan et al., 2026](#)).



Figure 3. Roblox Game Screenshot

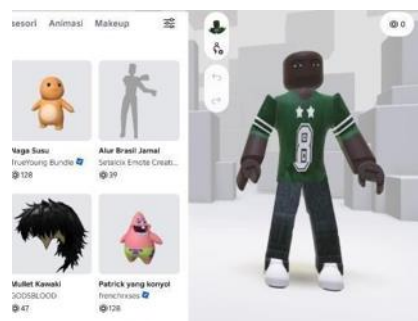


Figure 4. Roblox Game Screenshot

These empirical conditions reinforce the attachment ontology formulation by [Sa'diyah & Jannah, \(2025\)](#), which asserts that individuals suffering from emotional neglect or physical spatial constraints inevitably build external surrogate bonds to compensate for inner affective vacuums. Ultimately, the individual actualization of seeking alternative characters by Iki and Alka successfully fosters broader communal solidarity, as seen in the case of Rayhan and his friendship circle, which serves as the analytical focus of the upcoming section. Compensatory dimensions of alternative identity formation emerge when cyber figures act as projections of the player's ideal ego to navigate

constraints on their physical agency. The psychological phenomena of player embodiment and spatial presence reinforce these adaptation stages as adolescents feel their physical consciousness merge with artificial entities while simultaneously believing in their actual existence alongside peers in the gaming arena. Curated interaction patterns, along with positive feedback from the virtual community, successfully validate these digital self-portraits, thereby accelerating the crystallization of a collective compensatory personality that users perceive as their most authentic self-identity. These empirical conditions reinforce the attachment ontology formulation by [Sa'diyah & Jannah, \(2025\)](#), which asserts that individuals suffering from emotional neglect or physical spatial constraints inevitably build external surrogate bonds to compensate for inner affective vacuums. Ultimately, the individual actualization of seeking alternative characters by Iki and Alka successfully fosters broader communal solidarity, as seen in the case of Rayhan and his friendship circle, which serves as the analytical focus of the upcoming section.

Subcultural Solidarity and In-Group Formation

Subcultural solidarity among Rayhan and his fellow Roblox players can be seen in the way they form an exclusive gaming group on the platform. Field observations show that this sense of belonging is expressed mainly through two features: the use of matching themed outfits that create a shared visual identity, and the use of platform-specific slang and familiar avatar emotes during interactions. From the perspective of Social Identity Theory, these shared appearances and communication styles help establish clear boundaries between group members and outsiders. They strengthen the group's sense of identity and belonging while distinguishing its members from other players within the server. These empirical findings resonate with [\(Djaba et al., 2025\)](#), who formulate a digital symbolic interactionism model wherein character modification establishes a player's personal existence, while collective adherence to communal consensus gives rise to a cohesive cyber society. Furthermore, this group solidarity solidifies the adolescents' virtual sociological identity while mitigating interpersonal anxieties stemming from physical spatial isolation in the real world. Rayhan's account confirms the exclusivity of this interaction through their proprietary internal coded vocabulary, which, although baffling to outsiders, successfully boosts their sense of belonging and clan cohesion beyond that of competing alliances.

Tactical Adaptation to Platform Regulations

The third dimension of the collective compensatory personality manifests through the tactical adaptability of Pekojan youth when responding to external platform regulatory changes, specifically the tightening of user age restrictions enforced by the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs. Strategies employed by local adolescents such as Iki migrating the clan's chat room to WhatsApp after Roblox's chat filtering system restricted his account, alongside Rayhan coordinating the updating of his group's profile data demonstrate the fluidity of their virtual social identity [\(Asmara et al., 2026\)](#).

This tactical adaptation is not viewed as a violation by fellow group members; rather, it is adopted as a form of technological ingenuity to preserve the existence of their gaming group. Here, it becomes evident that a collective commitment to maintaining social relationships within a virtual third space gives rise to dynamic identity adjustments toward real-world regulatory policies. This aligns with the findings of [\(Istikhomah et al., 2026\)](#), who emphasize that within creative-social platforms like Roblox, communication encompasses a broad dimension in which computer-mediated verbal and nonverbal interactions function as dynamic tools for negotiating digital identity in response to external institutional constraints.

Conceptual Framework: Integrating Findings with Social Identity Theory

To synthesize the interconnection between the structural conditions of Pekojan, the migration process into virtual space, the theoretical foundations, and the three identified dimensions of collective-compensatory identity, Figure 5 illustrates the complete conceptual framework of this study.

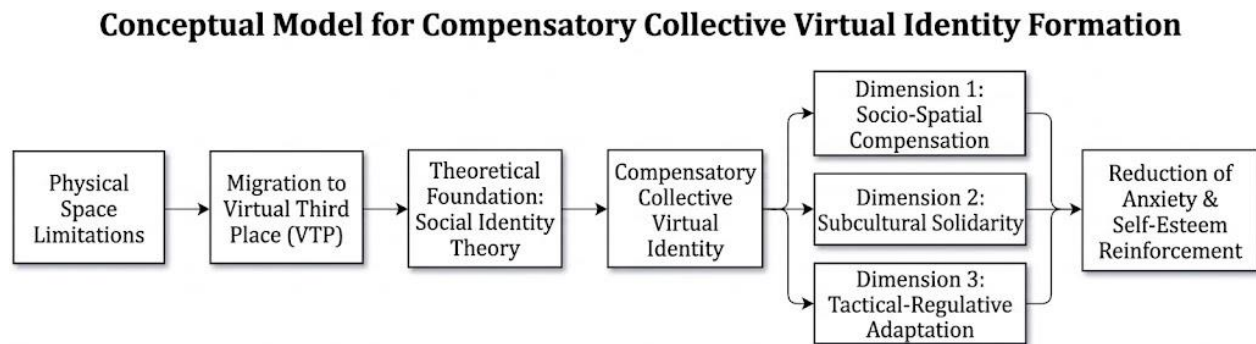


Figure 5. Conceptual framework of collective-compensatory identity formation among Roblox adolescents in the densely populated settlement of Pekojan, West Jakarta (Source: analyzed by the researchers, 2026).

Interconnection with Social Identity Theory and Research Findings

The flowchart in Figure 5 is interpreted as a sequential process. First, the structural conditions namely the spatial density and slum environment of the Pekojan settlement serve as the starting point that forces adolescents to seek alternative social spaces. Second, adolescents migrate to Roblox as a virtual third space, a process mechanically facilitated by hyperpersonal communication (Walther, 1996) and psychologically perceived through player embodiment and spatial presence. Third, this entire process is analyzed through the lens of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979): adolescents engage in social categorization when selecting specific servers or squads in Roblox, undergo social identification when aligning their avatars and language with group norms, and perform social comparison when positioning their group as superior to out-groups.

Santrock's developmental psychology textbook on youth studies (2024) serves as a psychological foundation for understanding the motivation behind seeking communal validation during the ages of 12 to 18, a stage when sensitivity to sociological acceptance reaches its peak, rather than acting as the origin of Social Identity Theory. Formulation unravels the developmental vulnerability of adolescents regarding their need for cyber personas, whereas Tajfel and Turner (1979) dissect the cognitive mechanisms through which this desire is fulfilled via categorization, identification, and group comparison. These two conceptual pillars complement rather than supersede each other in interpreting the field findings from all three research informants. The three dimensions of collective compensatory identity identified namely, the socio-spatial compensation observed in Iki and Alka, the subcultural in-group solidarity within Rayhan and his group, and the tactical regulatory adaptation demonstrated by all informants ultimately converge on a single psychological function: mitigating social anxiety while enhancing communal self-esteem. This process confirms the SIT prediction that meaningful group membership inevitably boosts the personal self-esteem of its individual members.

Bringing together the findings from all three informants and connecting them with the underlying theoretical framework is an important step before drawing the final conclusions. The proposed model presents the overall flow of the study, beginning with the specific behaviors observed among each informant and leading to broader empirical patterns. It also incorporates key concepts from Social Identity Theory to explain how these behaviors contribute to the formation of three dimensions of collective compensatory identity, which represent the main empirical findings of this study (Hair et al., 2021).

The three behavioral patterns of the informants encompassing Iki's visual character customization, Alka's adoption of authoritative roles, and Rayhan's leadership in group solidarity emerge as concrete manifestations of a single unified theoretical proposition rather than isolated phenomena. This formulation asserts that youth experiencing physical spatial constraints inevitably convert virtual gaming arenas into domains for social categorization and identification to reconstruct their communal self-esteem. This comprehensive synthetic construction directly underpins the structured formulation of the study's final conclusions (Mar'atusholihah & Sari, 2026).

Implications

The findings of this study have practical implications for newly established hotels in developing effective digital marketing communication strategies. The use of Instagram and TikTok, consistent digital content, responsive interaction with customers, and coordination between marketing and operational teams can support brand visibility and customer engagement during the early stages of hotel operations. Hotel management can use these findings as a reference for developing more consistent digital communication, improving customer responses through social media, and strengthening collaboration between departments to ensure that promotional content accurately represents the guest experience.

Research Contribution

This study contributes to the literature on digital marketing communication in the hospitality industry by focusing specifically on a newly established hotel during its initial operational phase. The study identifies four interconnected elements that support visitor growth: the use of Instagram and TikTok, consistent digital content, two-way digital interaction, and synergy between marketing and operational teams. These findings provide a more specific understanding of how digital marketing communication can be implemented to build brand awareness and engage potential guests when a hotel is still establishing its market presence.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, it employed a qualitative descriptive approach and involved only three informants consisting of hotel management, marketing personnel, and operational staff. Therefore, the findings mainly reflect the perspectives of individuals directly involved in the hotel's marketing and operational activities. Second, the study focused on a single newly established hotel, Radisson RED İzmir Point Bornova, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other hotels or hospitality contexts. Third, the study describes the contribution of digital marketing communication to increasing visitor numbers but does not quantitatively measure the specific effect of each digital marketing strategy on visitor growth.

Suggestions

Future research should involve a larger number of informants and include perspectives from hotel guests or potential customers to provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital marketing effectiveness. Comparative studies involving several hotels with different levels of brand maturity could also provide broader insights into digital marketing strategies in the hospitality industry. In addition, future researchers are encouraged to use quantitative or mixed-method approaches to measure the relationship between social media activities, customer engagement, brand awareness, and visitor numbers. For hotel management, maintaining consistent digital content, improving responsiveness to customer interactions, managing online reviews, and strengthening coordination between marketing and operational departments are recommended to support continued visitor growth.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the limitations of physical public space in the densely populated neighborhood of Pekojaan, West Jakarta, serve as the primary catalyst driving the migration of adolescent social activities to the virtual platform Roblox, which functions as a virtual third space substituting for constrained physical environments. Through hyperpersonal communication facilitated by avatar customization and curated messaging, Pekojaan youth successfully mitigate social anxiety and construct a singular, field-dominant identity construct namely, a collective-compensatory identity that can be coherently explained through Social Identity Theory.

This cyber personality construct merges the dimension of socio-spatial compensation realized through the projection of a higher group status image with communal subcultural solidarity expressed through specialized coded vocabulary and iconic emotes as internal faction markers, as well as tactical age regulatory adaptation via profile updating strategies to ensure seamless interaction under Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs policies. This interactive process establishes a dynamic outlet for affective motives, wherein physical space fuses with the digital ecosystem to sustain the social territorial resilience of urban youth.

Families should eschew repressive approaches that unilaterally ban children from engaging in Roblox, opting instead to understand it as a novel social space for active interaction. Parents hold the responsibility of providing communicative supervision while equipping their children with adequate digital literacy to ensure safe cyber navigation. Local governments and urban planners must prioritize the provision of child-friendly physical parks amid dense urban settlements in Jakarta, particularly in slum areas like Pekojan, to maintain sociological equilibrium between real-world and digital socialization among adolescents.

The Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs, alongside educational institutions, should collaboratively disseminate child cyber protection policies to support families through educational literacy approaches rather than relying solely on unilateral technical restrictions that prompt profile manipulation by youth. Future academic agendas could expand the research locus to communities with differing socioeconomic backgrounds to compare personality dynamics across alternative platforms beyond Roblox. Subsequent researchers may also employ mixed-methods approaches to quantitatively measure the impact of virtual avatar visualization on subjects' real-world self-confidence levels.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Rani Putri Sia contributed to the conceptualization of the study, development of the research design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and preparation of the manuscript. The author also contributed to reviewing, revising, and finalizing the manuscript for publication.

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