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Mediascape dan Imajinasi Masa Depan: Aspirasi Karier Mahasiswa Bahasa Jepang di Era Media Sosial

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis aspirasi karier mahasiswa jurusan Bahasa Jepang dan peran media sosial di dalamnya. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif dan teknik wawancara semi-struktural, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana mahasiswa memanfaatkan media sosial dan membentuk aspirasi karier mereka. Wawancara dilakukan terhadap enam mahasiswa yang telah memiliki pengalaman praktik industri sebelumnya. Beberapa konsep *scapes* dari Arjun Appadurai digunakan sebagai pisau analisis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya perbedaan pola konsumsi media di kalangan mahasiswa. Terdapat dua kelompok mahasiswa, yaitu mereka yang memanfaatkan media sosial untuk membangun imajinasi karier, memperluas jaringan profesional, dan merencanakan masa depan dan kelompok yang menggunakan media sosial lebih sebagai sarana rekreatif. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa orientasi masa depan mahasiswa jurusan bahasa Jepang tidak bersifat tunggal. *Mediascape*, *technoscape*, dan *ideoscape* memengaruhi imajinasi mahasiswa terkait kariernya di masa depan. Sebagian dari mereka membayangkan karir yang transnasional dengan orientasi ke luar negeri atau ke Jepang sebagai cita-cita, sedangkan sebagian lainnya lebih fokus pada karier di dalam negeri dengan kompetensi bahasa Jepang sebagai nilai tambah.

Kata kunci: aspirasi; karier; mahasiswa; *mediascape*

Mediascape and Future Imagination: Career Aspirations of Japanese Language Students in the Social Media Era

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the career aspirations of Japanese language students and the role of social media in their aspirations Using a qualitative approach and semi-structured interview techniques, this study explores how students utilize social media and shape their career aspirations. Interviews were conducted with six students who had previous industrial internship experience. Several scapes concepts by Arjun Appadurai are used as analytical tools. The results show differences in media consumption patterns among students. There are two groups of students: those who use social media to build career imaginations, expand professional networks, and plan for the future, and those who use social media more as a recreational tool. The analysis shows that the future orientation of Japanese language students is not a single one. Mediascape, technoscape, and ideoscape influence students' imaginations regarding their future careers. Some of them envision transnational careers with an orientation abroad or to Japan as their ideals, while others are more focused on domestic careers with Japanese language competence as an added value.

Keywords: ***aspiration; career; mediascape; students***

INTRODUCTION

Students, as part of the youth population, are at a crucial stage in determining their career trajectories. Many experts argue that today's youth are experiencing a state of uncertainty (Barelli et al., 2022). Young people today live in a society of rapid change and uncertainty, leading to disorientation. Individuals lose control of themselves as they face rapid change and an uncertain future (Leccardi dalam Barelli et al., 2022). This uncertainty drives youth to seek direction or guidance through media, particularly social media, which has become the most accessible platform for understanding various future possibilities, including careers and jobs. Currently, social media not only serves as a source of information for young people but also serves as a platform for representation that shapes orientation, choices, decision-making, and future career strategies. Social media serves as a means of interaction, so that an individual's thoughts and beliefs are often the result of their interactions with others (Gai et al., 2022), both direct and mediated interactions.

The influence of social media on individual mindsets is quite significant, based on the scale of its users in Indonesia. DataReportal reports that there were 143 million active social media users in Indonesia as of January 2025. This figure is equivalent to 50.2% of the total Indonesian population at the beginning of 2025 (Kemp, 2025). Generation Z students, as part of the young generation, use social media a lot for various purposes, including personal branding for competition in the job market (Smaldone et al., 2022). For students, social media is a crucial medium for accessing, interpreting, and reproducing meanings about the careers and jobs, thus shaping their orientation toward their professional futures. As a space where cultural messages are encoded and reinterpreted, social media enables young people to negotiate their aspirations and future orientations.

This study involved students majoring in Japanese, specifically Japanese for

business communication and professional. Within this framework, students majoring in Japanese studies occupy a significant role because they not only consume representations of Japan in digital spaces but also rearticulate them in relation to future career choices. As Tkachuk et al. (2025) argue, social media contributes to expanding access to career resources and increasing students' active participation in planning their futures (Tkachuk et al., 2025). However, not all students utilize social media to develop their employability (Salsaminia & Santosa, 2025).

Several studies have addressed social media use among college students and its use in job searches. Tkachuk et al. (2025) conducted an experimental study investigating the effectiveness of implementing social media-based career guidance. The results showed that, with the right strategy, social media can significantly improve career guidance outcomes. Social media has the potential to be a powerful tool in students' career development (Tkachuk et al., 2025). Another study also stated that career-oriented social media use—although on the one hand it can cause anxiety—also triggers deeper career exploration and reflection (Zhang et al., 2023).

Other studies have examined the relationship between social media and careers, including Putri and Uljanatunnisa (2023), who examined the perceptions of career representations by followers of the TikTok account @vmuliana. Factors such as educational background, life experience, and individual knowledge level influenced the level of perception of the informants, who were in dominant and negotiating positions (Putri & Uljanatunnisa, 2023). A similar study was conducted by Gozali and Sayuti (2025), who examined the influence of career education content on social media by content creator Vina Muliana on the job readiness of final-year students from 24 provinces in Indonesia. The study results showed that Vina Muliana's career education content had a positive influence on final-year students in preparing for their future careers (Ramadhan & Sayuti, 2025).

Unlike previous studies, this research specifically aims to analyze how Japanese language students construct their future careers and jobs, and how their experiences and interactions with social media influence their future career aspirations. Appadurai's concept of scapes will be used to analyze how students' career aspirations relate to the social media they use. The research subjects are Japanese language students who have previously had internships or work experience, thus gaining a more focused understanding of future career planning. This research is expected to contribute to youth studies and Japanese studies by demonstrating how Japanese language students, as representatives of educated young people, construct their future career imaginations in a social context mediated by digital technology.

METHODS

Appadurai introduced the concept of imagination as a social practice, stating that imagination is not merely an individual's wishful thinking, but a social process influenced by global media flows, migration, and life experiences. He explained, "*Imagination is now central to all forms of agency. It is the faculty through which people construct their own lives, identities, and possible futures*" (Appadurai, 1996). This implies that imagination is important because it is how a person constructs their life, self-identity, and future. Through imagination, students develop their future aspirations.

Appadurai describes *the capacity to aspire* as *the ability to read a 'road map to the future'* (Appadurai, 2004). According to Appadurai, these aspirations are generally held by young people regardless of class, but the capacity to have aspirations—which is shaped by social, cultural, economic experiences and access to information—is not shared equally (Bok, 2010).

This study used a qualitative narrative method, with six (6) Japanese language students as informants. Qualitative research is in-depth research aimed at understanding a particular phenomenon, thus facilitating a thorough, open, and detailed study of the problem (Patton, 2014). The research informants were Japanese language students aged 20-22 who had work experience or internships. As Appadurai explained, students' career imaginations don't emerge spontaneously but are shaped by exposure to social media, daily interactions, internship experiences, and global narratives about careers, success, and mobility. The research will focus on how students imagine the future through media consumption and internship experiences.

Several concepts from Appadurai will be used for analysis, namely imagination, mediascapes, and ideoscapes (Appadurai, 1996). *Imagination* refers to the social practices that shape actions or aspirations. *Mediascapes* refer to the global flow of information and narratives that influence imagination, while *ideoscapes* refer to the flow of ideas and values such as success, hard work, mobility, and so on (Appadurai, 1996). Thus, in this context, social media becomes a field where imagination is produced, circulated, and negotiated.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Thematic Findings on Students' Career Aspirations

Based on interviews, two main patterns were identified in social media usage among students. These two patterns are: (1) those who use social media as a recreational space, and (2) those who use social media as a means of career development. The following table presents brief profiles of the research informants and the social media platforms they actively use.

Table 1. Brief profile of informants and the significance of social media in career aspiration

Informant code	Social media	The influence of social media on career aspirations
F1	Instagram and TikTok	Not significant
A2	Instagram and TikTok	Not significant
I3	Instagram and TikTok	Not significant
D4	Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok	Significant
R5	Instagram and TikTok	Significant
S6	Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok	Significant

Source : Author, 2025

Next, the interview data was analyzed thematically. Table 2 below presents thematic findings within the framework of students' career imagination and aspirations.

Table 2. Thematic findings: framework of career imagination and aspirations

Main theme	Description	Theoretical representation
Media consumption patterns and career imagination	There are students who actively use social media for career development and networking, on the other hand, there are also students who use social media more as a means of recreation.	*Capacity to aspire*, imagination is formed both through social media and life experiences.
Mediated career aspirations	Certain social media accounts influence students' career aspirations. For example, viewing a particular account can foster or strengthen aspirations to work in a specific field, at a specific company, or even to work internationally. Social media serves as both a source of information and a role model for shaping career aspirations.	*Mediascape* and *technoscape* become arenas for the production of imagination.
Negotiating the future self	Students begin to reflect and negotiate between career representations on social media and reality through internship experiences.	*Practice of imagination*, students' imaginations are tested through real-life experiences such as internships. Negotiating the *ideoscape* with the *localscape* through lived experiences.

Source : Author, 2025

Mediascapes, imagination, and students' career aspirations

This study views students' career aspirations as the result of a complex social process. Students as individuals negotiate symbolic images of the world of work with their concrete experiences through work practices (part-time work, industrial practice or internships). Their career imaginations are not formed spontaneously, but through interactions with mediascapes, which are global flows of information, representations of careers and success, and through local experiences, for example through internships. The results of the study show two contrasting patterns, namely (1) a group of informants who stated that social media had no significant influence on career aspirations (F1, A2, and I3), and (2) a group of informants who stated that social media had a significant influence (D4, R5, and S6). Furthermore, from these results, an analysis was conducted regarding the framework of their imagination and career aspirations. Thus, the discussion will focus on three main themes of students' imaginations in interpreting their future careers.

1. Media consumption patterns and career imagination

Students as youth are often called digital natives, who are familiar with the digital world (Prensky, 2001). Global narratives, such as success stories abroad and the professional world, play a role in shaping their imaginative horizons. Imagination is a social practice that allows individuals to envision possible future lives and careers,

which is also partly mediated by the flow of information and representations on social media (Appadurai, 1996). However, career imagination and aspirations do not always come from the media. They can also be shaped by life experiences, as well as the influence of socioeconomic conditions and the environment in which one lives (Nilan et al., 2011; Parker & Nilan, 2013; Sutopo, 2014).

Informants F1, A2, and I3 admitted to actively using social media, but more for entertainment purposes (Table 1), as conveyed in the following interview excerpt.

> "*Saya sering dengarnya podcast horror gitu, soalnya saya suka cerita-cerita horror. Ya medsos buat entertain aja sih.. Kalau yang hubungannya sama pekerjaan, saya jarang banget nonton*." (F1, 2025)
>
> "I often listen to horror podcasts because I love horror stories. Well, social media is just for entertainment. I rarely watch anything work-related." (F1, 2025)

Likewise, informant A2 said,

> "*Kalau saya sih medsos buat tahu berita aja. Kalau yang hubungannya sama pekerjaan enggak sih, lebih ke nonton video yang Jepang-jepang gitu buat belajar bahasa Jepang, biar terbiasa dengar bahasa Jepang. Saya* subscribe channel weather forecast *Jepang gitu, jadi tiap hari dengerin berita cuaca pakai bahasa Jepang*." (A2, 2025)
>
> "For me, social media is just for news. Not for anything work-related, I prefer watching Japanese videos to learn Japanese and get used to hearing it. I subscribe to a Japanese weather forecast channel, so I hear the weather in Japanese every day." (A2, 2025)

Furthermore, informant A2 stated that he aspires to be a Japanese language teacher for his future career. Therefore, he relies more on career information from his university or from his high school teachers. Informant A2 received an offer to teach extracurricular activities in his second year of college and did an internship in the school library. He relies on direct information for job information, rather than through the media. This is similar to what informant I3 stated below,

> "*Dulu saya aktif di* TikTok *dan* IG*, sejak magang dan bergaul dengan orang Jepang, saya sekarang jarang pakai* TikTok*. Saya lebih sering buka* IG*, tapi ya untuk hiburan aja. Jarang sih kalau cari-cari info karir gitu.. lebih ke lihat konten tentang Jepang buat belajar. Lainnya ya buat hiburan aja*." (I3, 2025)
>
> "I used to be active on TikTok and Instagram. Since my internship and socializing with Japanese people, I rarely use TikTok anymore. I mostly use Instagram, but mostly for entertainment. I rarely look for career information. I mostly look at content about Japan to learn. Just for entertainment." (I3, 2025)

The statements of informants F1, A2, and I3 were almost identical, they placing social media more in the realm of entertainment than as a vocational tool. This finding indicates a gap between career representations in social media and career construction for some Japanese language students. Currently, social media does not play a significant role in their career development. This group is more tied to the ideoscape internalized from learning experiences and direct interactions—institutional

structures that emphasize local work values and stability. This finding aligns with research by Purboningsih et al., who found that social media usage patterns among adolescents and adults are largely for entertainment purposes (Purboningsih et al., 2022). So even though social media use is quite intense, this is not always followed by career-oriented actions.

Interaction with the media does not necessarily produce a uniform habitus with global culture (Abdillah et al., 2025). However, on the contrary, the process of internalizing values often strengthens a person's imagination, as Appadurai said regarding ideoscape, where the flow of global ideas is interpreted contextually according to local value structures and institutions (Appadurai, 1990). This phenomenon can be seen in students who do not use social media as their primary source of career orientation. They are more oriented towards institutional structures, such as campus, family, or community, which emphasize stable and realistic values.

In contrast to the previous three informants, the other three informants found social media very helpful in obtaining information about part-time jobs and internships (Table 1). They also stated that social media content inspires and shapes their career aspirations. This indicates that media consumption is heterogeneous, not uniform among individuals (Couldry, 2012).

Informants D4, R5, and S6 stated that social media significantly influenced their imagination and future career aspirations (Table 1). Informant D4, for example, admitted to having been interested in automotive since junior high school and since then, he has used Facebook, particularly the Facebook marketplace, to buy and sell vehicle parts. Since then, he has been active on social media, not only as a means of socializing but also as a means of earning income. He imagined one day working in the automotive industry. Studying in a Japanese language program further strengthened his desire to work in the Japanese automotive industry. Japan's representation as a country advanced in technology and automotive gave rise to a form of *aspirational imagination* (Appadurai, 1996), imagination of the future influenced by exposure to global narratives, primarily through the media.

Informant S6, who had experience working part-time before the internship, expressed a similar sentiment. She admitted that he followed many job and career accounts on social media, and that this was very helpful.

> “Saya follow akun-akun info magang dan internship kayak @anakmagang.id atau akun-akun kerja *part time* gitu. Dapat info magang kemarin juga dari medsos. Banyak sih info-info gitu dan membantu banget.” (S6, 2025)
>
> “I follow internship and internship information accounts like @anakmagang.id and other part-time job sites. I also got the internship information yesterday from social media. There's a lot of helpful information.” (S6, 2025)

The statement from informant S6 shows how social media is not only a means of recreation, but also an information space that broadens horizons regarding career opportunities, particularly internships for students. Through these accounts, students use social media as a resource that shapes their imaginations about the desired world of work. This illustrates an active process in interpreting digital content. Within the framework of technoscape and mediascape, these media flows become part of a global landscape that brings together narratives, images, and aspirations across borders (Appadurai, 1996). These informants show *capacity to aspire* (Appadurai,

2004), with a broad and diverse representation of careers. Imagination here becomes a structure of action that encourages students to plan their career strategies, such as applying for part-time jobs, internships, learning about work culture, and building portfolios.

2. Mediated aspirations

Imaginations about future careers are not always mimetic, but are often negotiations between global values and local contexts (Salazar, 2011). The group of students who use social media more intensively (D4, R5, and S6) may develop more global career aspirations, such as working in Japan or at a multinational corporation. In terms of careers, they envision working at a large company, financial stability, and the potential for cross-border mobility. This was conveyed by the following D4 informant,

> "*Saya dari SMP udah suka otomotif, makanya saya follow akun-akun kayak Toyota, Suzuki, gitu-gitu.. Saya pingin kerja di industri otomotif, ya pertama di Indonesia dulu, tapi suatu saat ingin bisa kerja di Jepang, kalau bisa di Toyota*" (D4, 2025)
>
> "I've been into automotive since junior high school, that's why I follow accounts like Toyota, Suzuki, and so on. I want to work in the automotive industry, first in Indonesia, but one day I want to work in Japan, if possible at Toyota." (D4, 2025)

Local contexts with global nuances, such as the presence of Japanese vehicle brands in everyday life, such as Toyota, Suzuki, and Honda, as well as personal experiences, such as internships, specifically influence how informant D4 views his future. He specifically follows influencers like Ridwan Hanif as a strategy to realize his future aspirations. D4's imagination is formed through local experiences and accompanied by social media experiences, through Facebook. His aspirations continue to grow along with his activity on Facebook. He took an internship in the marketing department of Suzuki motor vehicles in Yogyakarta. From this internship experience, he increasingly established relationships that strengthened his career aspirations, by working in the Japanese automotive industry. Nilan et al. explain the optimism in the ideal ideals of Indonesian youth to work in companies (Nilan et al., 2011) which is also evident in the statements of these informants.

Informant S6, who mentioned to following internship accounts, expressed a similar sentiment. She aspires to work for a multinational company that would allow him to live abroad, as quoted in the following interview,

> "*Saya pingin ke Jepang. Tapi lebih pingin kerjaan yang bisa bikin saya ditugaskan ke luar negeri gitu loh, yang nggak* stay *di Jepang aja, tapi bisa ke mana-mana ke berbagai negara gitu*." (S6, 2025)
>
> "I want to go to Japan. But I'd rather have a job that allows me to travel abroad, one that doesn't just stay in Japan but allows me to travel to various countries." (S6, 2025)

Informant S6 said to being active on Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn. She followed work-related accounts like @anakmagang.id and @jogjaparttime. Similarly, informant R5 is quoted below,

> "*Saya sering lihat info kerja dari IG, kayak @jogjaparttime, @anakmagang.id,*

juga akun-akun internship gitu. Kalau akun perusahaan yang sering saya lihat itu perusahaan Future Creative Network." (R5, 2025)

"I often see job postings on Instagram, like @jogjaparttime, @anakmagang.id, and internship accounts. The company account I often see is Future Creative Network." (R5, 2025)

Social media has become a space where global values regarding the "ideal job" and "social mobility" interact with the local contexts of informants. Career content on social media often reflects universal value structures, yet is still shaped by the users' sociocultural contexts (Kern et al., 2019). Thus, social media presents a space where global values are reinterpreted based on each individual's personal experiences and background. In the case of informants S6 and R5, they reflected on their social media experiences in light of their internship experiences and backgrounds. This demonstrates that social media serves as an arena for self-reflection and comparison. It also indicates mediated aspirations, formed through media representations and individuals' lived experiences. Aspirations are cultural capacities developed through the social practices and narratives surrounding the individual (Appadurai, 2004). Thus, social media provides a visual and symbolic narrative regarding the "ideal job", which is then negotiated by the informants through internship experiences and personal reflections.

This is slightly different from students who are less active on social media. Students responded to internships through social media, while also encountering local barriers such as unclear information, application formats, and trust in the sources used (Halpern et al., 2020). There is an interaction between global expectations regarding connectedness through social media and the reality in the local context, that not all students use social media for career purposes (Benson et al., 2014). In the case of informants F1, A2, and I3, they use social media more as a recreational medium, instead of using it to develop professional networks or seek career information.

These findings suggest that students' imaginations mediated through social media do not always lead to career and employment orientation. The global mediascape, which often presents narratives about the "ideal job" and "international mobility," interacts with local needs, where social media is often interpreted as a recreational space amidst the academic pressures of being a student. These findings align with Benson's statement that, although social media has significant potential for career development, some students still lack the employability literacy to utilize it effectively (Benson et al., 2014).

Informant A2 stated that when it comes to career development and work, he trusts information obtained directly from people he knows, such as teachers or lecturers, more. He admitted to actively using Instagram and YouTube, but mostly for entertainment and Japanese language learning purposes. For example, he subscribes to a Japanese weather forecast channel on YouTube and listens to weather news on it every day. He said that listening to news on YouTube helps him practice listening to Japanese communication.

Informant I3 also admitted to using social media to access information related to Japanese language and culture for learning purposes. From social media, they stated that they gained knowledge of Japanese language and culture that supported

their learning and could be applied in their daily lives and work environments during internships. Here, a process of cultural appropriation occurs: when global values such as Japanese work culture are adapted and negotiated according to the social environment and available career opportunities. The process of appropriation of values and ideas, such as Japanese work culture and professionalism, spreads across borders through media and educational flows, which can be understood as an ideoscape (Appadurai, 1996).

Social media enables users from diverse socio-cultural contexts to construct identities and aspirations based on global values alongside local needs (Miller et al., 2016). In the mediascape, social media functions as a symbolic arena where students' career aspirations are mediated (Appadurai, 1996). They perceive, imagine, and negotiate the meaning of these values. Students not only imitate global models but also select and adapt them to actual conditions. This analysis shows that amidst the global digital flow, students are not only passive consumers of global values but also active actors in the process of glocalizing career meaning. This demonstrates the intersection of the global mediascape with the local experiences of the informants as the younger generation.

Internships or work experience have a significant influence on shaping students' future career aspirations. For students, internships or part-time work provide experience that provides insight into the world of work (Meiji, 2019; Triningsih et al., 2025). The informants stated that through this internship, they began to understand the dynamics of the real world of work. Informant I3 said that he had experience working part-time in his first year of college. Subsequently, in his second year of college, he interned in the public relations division of the faculty, and during the semester break, he participated in an internship at a company. This internship experience shaped informant I3's career aspirations. He said that being directly involved in the world of work enabled him to reflect on the gap between his own competencies and those expected in the workplace. During this internship, informant I3 was assigned to the public relations department and was required to master Microsoft Office applications. He also attempted to learn independently through YouTube.

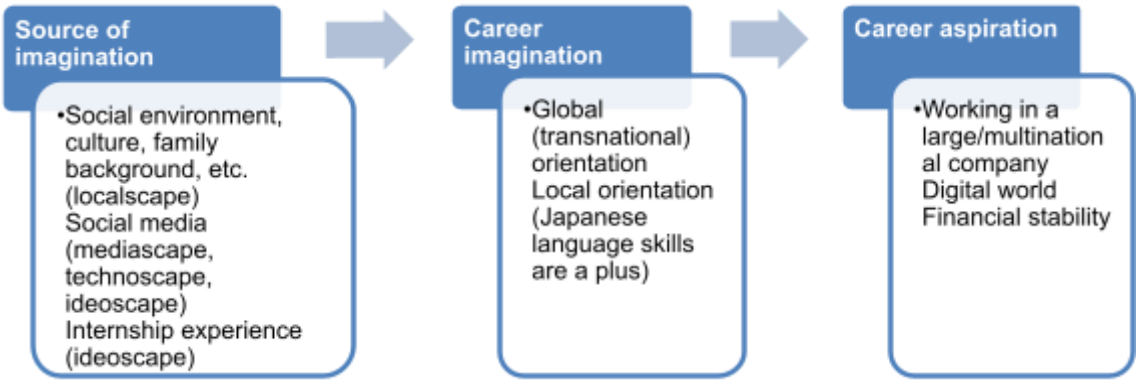
> "*Awalnya kan saya belum lancar excel, terus waktu dikasih tugas, dibilangi, pasti bisa dong, masak nggak bisa.. akhirnya ya saya berusaha belajar itu, lewat YouTube. Jadi bisa*.." (I3, 2025)
>
> "At first, I wasn't very good at Excel, but when I was given an assignment, I was told, 'You can do it, right? How can you not?'" I finally tried to learn it, through YouTube. So now I can do that.." (I3, 2025)

Informant I3, who has had internship experience in three locations, stated that he wants to work in fields related to digital and public relations. The internship experience has led him to reflect on his future career aspirations. The internship also contributes to strengthening career concerns, as students begin to realize the importance of planning for the future (Savickas, 2013). This was agreed upon by all informants. Internship experience became an important trajectory, where direct interaction with the world of work led to deeper reflections than career representations on social media. Thus, these six informants demonstrated two distinct modes of aspiration: three based on representation, and three based on experience.

3. Negotiating the future self

The internship experience in Indonesia plays a crucial role in students' self-negotiation process. The internship period provides a means for them to examine the realities of the working world and visualize it in relation to the idealized images they see on social media. This final section examines how students position themselves within their career imaginations. The following diagram illustrates the flow of student informants' career imaginations.

Diagram 1. Career imagination flow



Source : Author, 2025

Differences in sources of imagination result in differences in how students negotiate the meaning of success. For those who actively use social media for career development, success is often associated with the ability to penetrate the global job market (transnational orientation), such as working for a large company. Internships during college become an important trajectory that opens up opportunities for students to develop future career strategies. This was conveyed by informant F1, who undertook work experience in the hospitality sector,

> "*Wah kerja di hotel itu berat sekali ternyata. Ya sebelumnya saya sedikit banyak lumayan tahu sih, karena ayah saya kan kerja di hotel. Tapi setelah saya menjalani sendiri, ternyata rasanya begini.. ya mungkin tiap divisi beda ya, saya di FO rasanya udah nggak mau lagi deh, mungkin di bagian lain aja. Besok kalau magang atau kerja saya inginnya di bidang* digital marketing*, yang bikin konten-konten gitu*.." (F1, 2025)
>
> "Wow, working in a hotel is really tough. Well, I knew a little bit about it before, because my dad works in hotel. But after experiencing it myself, it turns out this is how it feels... well, maybe each division is different. I don't think I want to work in the FO division anymore, maybe in another department. In the future, if I do an internship or work, I want to be in digital marketing, creating content like that..." (F1, 2025)

Informant F1 is a vocational high school graduate. She studied marketing in school, thus possessing a basic knowledge of marketing. Furthermore, seeing her father work in a hotel, she wanted to try to work at the hospitality industry. During her internship, in addition to front office duties such as handling reservations, she also assisted the marketing division several times in creating social media content. It was

then that she reflected on her career aspirations. She saw her greatest interest in digital marketing, aligning with her learning experiences at vocational high school and her current vocational education. Therefore, in the future, she wants to intern and delve deeper into the field of digital marketing so that she can one day work in the digital marketing area. This indicated the negotiation between imagination and reality that informant F1 encountered during her internship, enabling her to build career aspirations. Informant F1 showed an experience-based capacity to aspire. Self-negotiation was also showed by informant I3 who had three internship experiences.

> "*Pertama kali nyoba kerja itu magang di perusahaan property gitu, saya bantu di promosi medianya. Nggak lama sih, waktu semester 1, baru belajar juga, setelah itu saya magang di humasnya fakultas, terus terakhir kemarin nyoba di perusahaan gede sebagai* corporate communication*. Kerjaannya mengelola informasi ke public. Tiga pengalaman ini benar-benar ngebentuk saya, jadi belajar banyak dan tahu tentang humas dan marketing, oh kerja itu kayak gini, banyak yang belum saya ngerti, yang di kampus nggak diajari. Saya jadi belajar dan tahu nanti pengennya kerja (di bidang) apa*." (I3, 2025)
>
> "The first time I tried working was an internship at a property company, where I helped with media promotions. It wasn't long, during my first semester, when I was just learning. After that, I interned in the faculty's public relations department. Then, most recently, I tried working at a large company as a corporate communications officer. The job was managing information for the public. These three experiences really shaped me. I learned a lot and learned about public relations and marketing. Oh, work is like this, there's a lot I don't understand, things I wasn't taught at university. I learned and knew what I wanted to work in one day." (I3, 2025)

The statement above implies that informant I3 negotiated several experiences, including those at university, part-time work, and internships. Informants F1 and I3 reflected on their internship experiences, while informant A2 already had a goal of working as a Japanese language teacher, and in searching for an internship, he was guided toward that goal (Table 2). However, all three agreed that their future career aspirations were shaped not only by their learning experiences but also by their reflection and negotiation within their internship experiences. Students navigate the flow of ideas and values through their own *localscape*, namely the social, cultural, and economic context in which they grew up. This creates a *glocalization* in their career aspirations.

Based on the interviews, it was found that students do not consume media passively. Although social media content offers dominant representations of ideal careers and jobs, they actively confirm these contents to avoid being trapped by the hegemony of ideal career representations in the media.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study revealed two contrasting career aspiration patterns. Three informants (F1, A2, and I3) had more contextual career aspirations and did not target Japan as their primary employer. They viewed their domestic internship experience as a learning experience for professionalism and work adaptation. In contrast, the other three informants (D4, R5, and S6) demonstrated more global

aspirations. All three viewed Japan (or abroad) as an "idealized destination" in their career imaginations, and social media played a significant role in shaping these aspirations.

These differences in media consumption patterns and career aspirations among Japanese language students indicate that the future orientation of Japanese language students is not singular. Some envision transnational careers with overseas or Japanese orientations as their goals, while others focus more on domestic careers with Japanese language competency as an added value. This indicates that the career aspirations of students or young people in general are greatly influenced by global media (Robertson et al., 2018), as well as by life experiences and social and cultural conditions in the environment.

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