

Visual Intimacy and Social Connectivity: Tagging and Reposting Instagram Stories Phenomenon in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Articulation of emotions and social interactions in everyday life is currently mediated through social media. The practice of tagging and reposting on social media in visual form as part of sharing moments on social media accounts can be seen as a complex social phenomenon. Activities that take place in this digital space involve the construction and maintenance of social interaction through a visual culture that is intertwined with layers of prevailing norms and personal expectations. Understanding this phenomenon is crucial to understanding the meaning and practices of social ties that have important consequences for the way people live and the way they understand the world. This paper explores the dynamics of tagging and reposting Instagram stories in Indonesia. The research is conducted through an ethnographic approach among 8 daily Instagram users. The findings of this study show that tagging and reposting weight in the structuring and preservation of social bonds and relationships. The cultural practice of visual intimacy in social media discloses a multifaceted landscape that influences and shapes current social interactions and relationships. It is intertwined in the dynamics of relationship expectations, representations, and depth in correlation with the quality of the relationship bonds. A symbolic interplay that marks a space for recognition, appreciation, relationship evaluation, as well as the desire to connect in the digital era.

Keywords: *Visual intimacy, social ties, tagging, social media, reposting.*

INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of the lives of today's youth. On most social media platforms, users interaction comes in the form of liking, commenting, or reposting. Various features are present on each social media platform, even though they use different terms, such as retweeting, which is known on Twitter and is now called X, sharing as a term on Facebook, and reposting on Instagram. In general, the sharing feature is the forwarding of other users' social media uploads to a personal network.

Amidst the use of social media in people's daily lives, the Instagram platform to date is still Indonesian users' favorite social media. According to dataindonesia.id, Instagram accounts for 84.8% of the 191 million active social media users in Indonesia (Mahdi, February 25, 2022). Apart from being used to upload preferred content to Instagram accounts, a form of practice of tagging and reposting stories on Instagram is mushrooming rapidly in Indonesia. Instagram stories are one of the top features that have won the hearts of Instagram users in the blink of an eye since their first integration into the platform. This feature allows users to share personal stories within 24 hours. In practice, this feature gives birth to a new phenomenon related to the articulation of social relations between users.

The practice of tagging and reposting stories is growing rapidly among Instagram users. In Indonesia, this unique phenomenon occurs in the practice of articulating attention and social ties. In its development in Indonesia, Instagram stories are used as a medium for mutual comments, sending thanks and congratulations between users. This practice itself creates a new space for interpersonal bonds that are displayed in public spaces. This unique phenomenon opens up questions about the social value of online interactions.

As sharing stories is part of sharing daily narratives. Ahmad (2004) states that culture, as a way of life, interlocks in nature with narratives, where one could not survive without the other. His article exploring the practice of organizational stories has highlighted the overlaps of language and the construction of reality in the layers of culture that provoke further research on the topic. Nonetheless, narratives coordinate perceptions and behaviors towards others creating unique-symbolic common ground. In this rationalization, the common practice of tagging in Instagram shared stories can be seen as an emerging creation and co-creation of social interactions and realities that are culturally distinct.

Since social media exploded onto the media landscape, studies have shown that social media has radically changed ideas and experiences regarding privacy and intimacy. Social media accounts are used to practice storytelling and tell intimate stories about their families, their travels, or their parenting experiences (Berlant, 2000; Garde-Hansen & Gorton, 2013). Stine Lomborg (2014) explains that the use of social media has become a daily activity that opens up space for intimate practices, especially long-distance intimacy (see Elliott & Urry, 2010).

The act of displaying gifts, congratulations, or forms of interconnected social ties through social media accounts can be seen as an inseparable part of the representation of intimacy, or in general related to networks and social capital. As mentioned above, how narratives and culture are intertwined are part of a communication practice that turns urgent to investigate in the current global digital scape; where little is yet explored on the culturally particular unique-symbolic means of creating social ties and reality among the huge Instagram users of Indonesians today.

The social relationships represented through the practice of re-uploading mentions on Instagram stories are not neutral. Bourdieu stated that network ties are not given naturally or exist in a vacuum (Bourdieu, 2001 as stated in Granovetter, 2018). The formation of bonds is an orderly process and generally follows the social order produced by social class, gender, race, and other divisions of social strata. Apart from that, social ties always involve the consensus of the parties and include expectations and hopes in the relationship between them; both are governed by social logics that apply beyond their own particular ties. In practice, the terms of the relationship are jointly structured and determined through the mutual control strategies of the parties. The dimensions of social ties then have various layers and functions in the dynamics of social life.

Uploads and personal links via social media in the form of posts depicting togetherness, expressions of gratitude, congratulations or personal moments through uploading stories from social media accounts are not merely markers of the complexity in the social ties dynamics and representation but also inseparable part of the visual intimacy culture.

Social media expression can be seen as an awareness of the mediation of relational intimacy, which is determined through the choice of visualization in the hands of the social media account user. In Hidayat, Dirantika and Lampe (2024) exploration of the flexing phenomenon highlights how self-expression on social media becomes an important aspect of

flexing practices to express their achievements or important moments in their lives. The choice of visualization is a representation of the intimacy and social relations that are expected to be built in this social practice phenomenon. There is an apparent cultural shift toward visual communication on social platforms that serve as an emotional interaction (Maliki et al., 2024). The creation of intimacy and social bonds is thus based on visual content that is woven into the practice of social bonds in society.

Uploading Instagram stories by linking accounts has become part of the daily social and cultural network representation of Indonesian society. Such practices unexpectedly involve the construction and maintenance of social ties through visual cultural practices. This practice is also inseparable from the complexity of layers of society, be it social class, gender, race or religion. Understanding this phenomenon is crucial in understanding the meaning and practices of social ties that have important consequences for the way Indonesian people live and the way they understand the world. Thus, this research tends to explore two things; firstly, the dynamics and practice of articulating social connectivity through the Instagram story feature, and secondly, articulating social ties and bonds in visualization practices on social media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars have long been interested in status claiming and seeking on social media (see, for example, Abidin, 2016; Gandini, 2015; Scolere et al., 2018). Fiers (2020) addresses two issues in tagging affordances, such as location tags, account tags, and hashtags to explore how Instagram users utilize the tagging aspects of the platform to seek and claim status as well as how people display themselves. The study demonstrates that Instagram users use the platform's tagging affordances to create a high-status picture of themselves, after the establishment of a framework for comprehending status and impression management. Some are able to flip based on a threshold of status affordances (see Duffy, 2017).

This particular research explores the intricacies of social bonds, representations, and visual intimacy embedded within the act of tagging and reposting Instagram stories. We consider the phenomenon within a broader digital life perspective, where technology and media play a vital role in mediating everyday life and interconnecting relationships. Barker et al. (2018) have provided a bifocal insight into this study: first underlining the effects and roles of representing intimacy through a mediated form, and secondly, the use of technology in nurturing and maintaining closeness in social relationships. With this, it is imperative to consider that visual content and the practices surrounding them form the basis of social connections in these individualistic yet creative expressions.

a. Social Connectivity, Ties, and Bonds

Social connections, alternatively known as social links or bonds, refer to an individual's interpersonal relationships established with others within their societal milieu. The strength, type and context of these connections may vary and include relationships: familial, friendly, professional, or otherwise. The vitality of these connections lies in their influence on different facets of an individual's psychological, social, and emotional well-being.

Frameworks for understanding the formation and complexity of social connections draw from an extensive range of theories within sociology and psychology. These include, but are not limited to, Social Exchange Theory (Hollander & Homans, 1963; Blau, 1986; Emerson, 1976; Kenkel, 1959; Granovetter, 1983), Social Capital Theory (Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam, 1995),

Attachment Theories and Social Identity Theories, Network Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and Dunbar's Number.

In the corporeal world, it is worth noting that these theoretical frameworks do not function in a standalone manner but rather coalesce and are influenced by individual experiences and cultural contexts. An important consideration in understanding the substance of these links, as mentioned by Azarian (2010), is recognizing the significance of network structures that identify and foster social ties. Social networks don't spontaneously emerge or exist in a vacuum (Granovetter, 2018). The process of bond establishment is a structured progression observing extant social order influenced by factors such as class, race, and gender divisions. Hence, even though the stipulations of a particular bond, manifest from mutual controls, are not purely individual preferences, they are not autonomous from existing societal norms and regulations.

The terminology of 'social ties' and 'social bonds' are employed interchangeably within different theoretical frameworks. These terms comprise a multitude of relationships that an individual has with others, varying degrees of intimacy, structural formations, emotional attachments, and psychological associations developed with societal institutions. Moreover, these connections are multiplex, entwined, and recur within the same societal paradigm.

Meaningful analysis of social connectivity hinges upon acknowledging the existence of social bonds across various fields and social strata; the concept that connectivity through bonding and engagement in an intricate web of relationships represents social conditions (White, 1986 as cited in Azarian, 2010). This becomes the foundation for any approach inclined to comprehend social life (Granovetter, 1985). Examining these connections necessitates an in-depth and systematic investigation focusing not only on the structural aspect of these ties but also on the nuances of their mechanicity. Using Azarian's work (2010) as a reference, we examine three specific facets of these social connections: their durability, the inherent mutual expectations, and the sought social recognition.

Durability, as the name suggests, represents the constancy of the social interactions contributing to the bond. This is indicative of the specific associations between parties and the cumulative strength and intensity of their interactions. Another factor to consider is mutual expectations. These expectations, albeit may not have symmetrical alignment, define the dynamics of these relationships. Finally, recognizing the existence of these social relationships unravels intertwined aspects of connectivity, including the impacts of past interactions, history embedded within the relationship, and potential future prospects.

b. Visual Intimacy and 'Capital' within Interactions

The digital age has fostered social connections mediated through visual culture exponentially magnified through the daily usage of social media. The visual, thus turns iconic, embodying meanings bestowed upon them by the cultural connotations. Mediatization further heightens this process described as "a fundamental moment in the development of communication as symbolic interaction: its passing through technologically-based infrastructures of transmission and distribution 'media' (Couldry & Hepp, 2013, p.197).

In a study examining Flickr users, Nancy Van House (2007) suggested that users share personal pictures to chronicle their lives and connect with close associates. This act brought a sense of "togetherness", subtly connecting with the concept of co-presence (Hjorth, 2012). Selfie practices have been explained in close connection with the concept of co-presence and the negotiation of intimacy in public venues facilitated by the sharing aspect of social media

platforms (see Fletcher & Cambre, 2009; Papacharissi & Gibson, 2011). Furthermore, social media platforms serve as stages where users negotiate intimacy in public through self-disclosure “in a choreographic way”, monitoring the reactions and affections of others via their comments (Lasén & Gómez-Cruz, 2009).

Visual practices have been continually employed to establish and reinforce intimacy within relationships, with instances of picture-taking acting as signs of relationship commitment (Schwarz, 2010). Furthermore, practices revolving around sending, publishing, and looking at visuals all are instrumental in developing a greater sense of connectedness and commitment, thereby enhancing the stability of relationships (Tarnutzer et al., 2023).

Visual representation has long been part of human communication practice; conveying ideas, information, and emotions. Abstracting from Gillian Rose’s (2012) *Visual Methodologies*, Morna Laing (2017, p.7) describes how images have three sites at which meaning might be studied: the site of production, the image itself, and the site of reception. Both production and reception fall into a sociological approach in understanding how meanings are produced and created. The sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, well known for his works on the sociology of culture is influential in his theories on social capital which is based on his wider sociological theories of habitus and fields of practice (Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu’s conceptualization is grounded in theories of social reproduction and symbolic power. Those of such production and power lies on the individual’s capability in acquiring social capital. Bourdieu framed social capital as resources acquired by individuals through the possession of “more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p.119). Therefore, social capital resides in the individual and is linked to social connections that a person utilizes. There’s a fluidity in which the social capital is reliant on the context of a particular social space and the complexity of the environment. Visual practices through stories sharing in social media in this sense can be seen as a production of symbolic capital in the complexity of social practice within the digital scape.

METHODOLOGY

Diving deep into the unique societal tapestry of the digital age, this research navigates the intricate labyrinth of exchanges, interactions, and relationships structured around the practice of tagging and reposting through Instagram Stories in Indonesia. The study uses an ethnographic approach to capture social realities rooted in human experience within the omnipresent tides of digital practices. Operationalizing the ethnographic research pattern laid out by Ratna (2010, p. 188-190), the data collection exercise entailed firsthand encounters with the bustling epicenters of this phenomenon with the individuals at its core. This primary data, unfiltered and undiluted, offers raw insight into the genesis, execution, and perception of the practice; a nuanced understanding of how it has become interwoven into the socio-digital fabric of Indonesia.

To gather participants and capture the broad conglomerate of perspectives contributing to genuine people's experiences, a swift online questionnaire was dispersed through the web of social media as a means to find participants in this research. This procedure amasses 39 sets of viewpoints, painting an extensive tableau of the general conditions pertaining to the phenomenon. The principal participants critical to this research were the curation of eight individuals, aged 20-30, dispersed across multiple Indonesian cities.

Visual observations were also conducted as secondary data. Visual material in the form of Instagram stories was collected from public accounts to further capture the practice of Instagram story uploads; whilst stories from the participants' accounts given with their consent were observed to deepen the exploration of their experience of Instagram stories practice.

Data analysis was undertaken methodically, parsing the raw information through a fine sieve of reduction and categorization. The resulting data findings were then cross-referenced with social ties constructs, ensuring that the final data interpretation not only accurately reflected the reality of the phenomenon but also upheld rigorous academic standards.

Table 1: Research participants

Participants	Sex	Age	Origin	Occupation
Participant 1	F	24	Salatiga	Educator
Participant 2	F	24	Surabaya	Digital Creator
Participant 3	M	24	Bandung	Student
Participant 4	F	25	Surakarta	Student
Participant 5	F	28	Gresik	Journalist
Participant 6	M	26	Semarang	Freelance
Participant 7	F	26	Kendal	Student
Participant 8	M	30	Jakarta	Entrepreneur

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Posting stories on Instagram is a daily practice among social media users in Indonesia. Features in tagging other people or accounts and reposting stories that were tagged are a part of these practices that holds a molding of the social connectivity, bonds, and ties in the digital era. Such practice comprehends the act of selecting visuals, considering self-image and others, reflecting closeness and social norms as well as evaluation of relationships.

When Instagram users share events with their followers and audiences, they frequently utilize the reposting and tagging capabilities. These features typically take the shape of images, videos, or text. Instagram users can tag other accounts in comments, posts, biographies, and stories by using the "tagging" tool. When someone is tagged on Instagram, other users will be notified later on, letting them know why they were tagged. In addition, users can repost stories on Instagram more easily thanks to the tag feature. When someone mentions another person, organization, or thing on social media, they can interact with them using tags. Tagging alerts recipients and provides a hyperlink to the tagged profile on Facebook and Instagram.

Online relationships in social media practices are often based on offline interactions. Relationships mediatized by digital means concurrently possess a history of in-person interactions. This implies that the primary objective of those who engage on social media is to maintain offline, or real-world interactions, which also hold significance (Jamieson, 2013). Social media relationships foster the development of intimate feelings and physical experiences that are expressed through written and visual symbols, as people always desire to feel together, especially in close relationships, even though they are separated by distance (Sirisena, 2012).

In the midst of Indonesia's digital society, Instagram Stories have become an integral part of the expression and complexity of representation through social media. The findings of this research are broken down into two main discussion sections, namely, 'the daily practice of reposting and tagging Instagram Stories' and 'Complexity of Connectivity and Emotions in Instagram Stories'.

a. The Daily Practice of Reposting and Tagging in Instagram Stories

Instagram Stories reaches over 500 million posts daily, which takes up a third of the active Instagram users worldwide (Iqbal, 02 May 2023). The uploads of Instagram Stories are done by 86,6 % users daily, and are dominated by millennials (Beckman, 2023). The high use of Instagram stories in Indonesia is apparent. Through the short online poll that was conducted, 96% of respondents were dominated by millennials who use the Instagram Stories feature on a daily basis. Through the experience of the participants in this study, the daily use of Instagram stories is generally claimed as a tool of documentation in their daily activities. Although it is apparent that there is a personal curation process to these Instagram Stories. The word 'content' is used frequently among the participants, indicating an awareness of the mediatized environment. Such daily Instagram stories that are seen as 'content' worthy are those that are claimed as special, out of routine, or seen as unique and rare.

"...seringnya pas di momen di mana aku jarang ngelakuin kegiatan itu alias di momen yang bakalan jarang aku lakuin sih" (Participant 3)

[Translated: "...often at moments where I rarely do those activities, or moments that I would rarely do anyway"]

"Aku menjadikan instagram adalah tempat untuk mengabadikan momen dan berbagi cerita, terutama jika ada kejadian yang aneh atau special." (Participant 2)

[Translated : "I see Instagram as place to capture moments and share stories, especially if something strange or special happens"]

The process of mentioning or tagging a personal Instagram account, on the other hand, is always tied to group activities and social ties. Tagging another personal account is dependent on social ties. Formal relationships or weak social ties, such as those with colleagues, working supervisors, or people related to the working environment, are dependent upon the prevailing social expectations and norms. While informal relationships or strong social ties are dependent on the degree of intimacy and psychological closeness of the user. In this type of social connectivity, the practice of tagging and reposting Instagram Stories shows three visible considerations of the act; the moments, the aesthetics, and the issue of privacy.

Instagram Stories uploads with tagging another personal account within strong social ties rely on shared moments and activities. These activities can be categorized as shared social related activities or as celebrative moments. Shared social related activities include group activities and moments, such as hanging out with friends, working in groups, or gatherings. In such shared activities, Instagram Stories and people that tend to post Instagram Stories are seen as favorable among the members. Most of the research participants agree that being active in posting stories when having group activities and gatherings is seen as an important

asset to the group. This important asset refers to their contribution to documenting memories that are generally favorable in the culture. Such claims of importance also contribute to the notion of belongingness among the active users of social media. As one of the participants explained that most tagging activities within group activities are even requested by the members of the group.

"..aku jadi sie dokumentasi di antara teman-temanku, dia juga mengatakan harus dijaga temennya yang kayak aku untuk gak dilepas. ...biasanya aku ngetag seringnya karena diminta sih, seringnya diminta loh ya, mereka akan bilang nanti kalau Upload jangan lupa tag aku ya" (Participant 6)

[Translated: ".I became the documentation person among my friends, they also said that friends like me should always be taken care of and not never let go. ...usually I tag because they asked to be tagged; often they say when you post it dont forget to tag me"]

Celebrative moments mark most of the common time when people tag and mention personal accounts in their Instagram Stories. Celebrative moments may include religious celebrations such as Christmas or led, as well as personal achievements or special days. On religious celebrations, the exchange of gifts among Indonesian society is a common practice, and this always entails an expression of gratitude by the receiving end by uploading the gift visual as well as tagging the sender in Instagram Stories. Personal celebrative moments such as birthdays, weddings, graduation or achievements, are also moments that often mark the times people tag other accounts in their Instagram Stories. Such actions can be seen as an extension and a substitution of self-presence in the other person's life and create an emotional bond.

"..aku merasa ketika dia ngirim hampers atau nge-tag aku di story untuk ngucapin selamat tuh jadi berasa disayang.. hahaha does that make sense?". (Participant 5)

[Translated: I feel when someone sends me hampers or tag me in their Instagram Stories to congratulate me, I feel loved.. hahaha does that make sense?"]

The practice of Instagram Stories among the users shows an awareness of privacy issues and visual aesthetics. The participants claimed that tagging and mentioning other people on their posts entangles considerations and reconsiderations of other people's approval, both in the process of mentioning as well as the intended image.

Many have the awareness of having the other person's approval by asking for permission; as one of the participants explicates, "I usually ask for their permission if I can upload and tag them in my stories because I have friends who are okay with me posting photos of them, but prefer not to be tagged or mentioned" (Participant1). In most cases, when a photo of another person is deemed inappropriate, embarrassing, or private, there seems to be a common awareness to ask for consent before posting and tagging.

"...ya mungkin kalau personal lebih ke kayak foto lagi nguap, video ngorok ...minta ijin dulu aja sih. Takutnya nanti malah dia dapet masalah gitu" (Participant 6)

[Translated: "...maybe for personal pictures, like yawning photos, snoring videos, ...I'd ask for permission first. Because I fear that it may cause them problems"]

"Lebih ke jangan post yang bersifat sangat private mungkin ya, kayak informasi-informasi pribadi ..cewek yang berjilbab ya jangan upload story pas dia ga pake jilbab. ...Lebih ke menghargai satu sama lain aja gitu" (Participant 8)

[Translated: "Not post things that are very private, like personal information. ...or posting a girl who usually wears a hijab when she's not wearing a hijab.. Basically try to respect each other"]

The uncertainty of tagging and mentioning often leads users to mention other people's accounts in a hidden manner. This act further highlights the awareness of visual language and aesthetics in their daily practice.

"Biar aesthetic tulisan tagnya aku hide atau pakai fitur tag story yang bikin ga kelihatan sih" (Participant 1)

[Translated: "To keep the post aesthetic, I hide the tag writing or use the story tag feature, which makes it invisible"]

The uncertainty of tagging and mentioning other people's accounts is claimed as a consideration that it may be a personal as well as a social burden to the other party. Considering the act of reposting has become an unspoken digital 'ethic' among social media users in Indonesia.

The curation of visual aesthetics is likely to influence the practice of tagging and reposting. Facial expressions and looks captured in the Instagram stories are also taken into consideration among the participants. Finding a picture that they consider as ugly would lead them to be hesitant in reposting the story. This is an interesting finding, as it highlights the contesting value of self-representation and relationship maintenance in the digital scape.

"malu buat di repost ya ga di repost, soalnya konyol sih, ga ada gw poto cantik"an.. Emang gw jelek si" (participant 7)

[Translated: "I'm ashamed to repost it, so I don't repost, it's ridiculous, I don't look beautiful.. I think I'm really ugly"]

The act of not reposting a tagged story comes with an awareness regarding relationship consequences. It has become a common and agreed effect that sharing a story comes with the hopes of being reposted by the mentioned account. The possibility of the other person in complying may lead to disappointments and awkwardness within the relationship. Like many of the participants, one mentioned:

"Awalnya kecewa anjir ga di repost, Padahal gw storiin mukenye diee kann. Dia jd dapet momen, Ehh kaga di repost. Yaudah gw ancurin aja ekspektasi gwe" Gw yang kecewa" (participant 2)

[Translated: "At first I was so disappointed that my story wasn't reposted, even though it's their portrait. And it wasn't reposted. But I guess it's okay, it only ruined my expectations. I'm the one who's disappointed"]

The act of reposting is a valuable practice in the maintenance of relationships and intimacy. It is found to be an indicator of respect and appreciation of the other. The visual aesthetics add complexity to this practice of reposting. Visual aesthetics are also seen as an additional value to the relationship. Hence a beautiful and well-edited picture or video in the Instagram story is valued as the depth of emotion and value of the relationship. One of the participants explained how she puts time and effort into creating a story in regards to the other person, and would not imagine if her effort is not appreciated through the act of reposting. She also points out how she wishes someone would put in the same effort in making stories about her.

"gilakkkk gw pas ngedit beginian. pengenn banget dah ada yang bikin gw video beginiiiiiiii, vibes nya seru mampuss, apa dia ga di masukin reels sedihh. padahal kan langka. gw bantai aja ga di repost gw ngeditnya semaleman gileee dengan sepenuh hati" (Participant 2)

[Translated: "Its crazy editing this. I really wish someone would make me one like this, the vibes are so exciting, and they didn't upload it as reels. That's so sad. I mean it's a rare documentation. If they don't at least repost it, I'm gonna kill them, I mean.. I edited it the whole night with all my heart"]

The practice of Instagram stories today are not merely a feature of networks and social connectivity. Visual aesthetics comprise expectations, representations, and depth in correlation to the quality of the relationship bonds. It holds a space for recognition and appreciation that indicates the depth of a subject's desire to connect or the value they place on the relationship in question.

b. Complexity of Connectivity and Emotions in Instagram Stories

The practice of reposting and tagging other personal accounts through Instagram Stories is a mediatization process of social ties and bonds. This process holds a complexity of social connectivity that can be described through the matter of social inclusion and exclusion, the burdens of prevailing social ties and norms, and the building of intimacy and trust. These matters are apparent through the facets of social connections, that of, the relationship durability, the inherent mutual expectations, and the social recognitions.

Users tend to tag or mention people sharing the same activities whom they know personally and with whom they have a bond or closeness. When tagging another account, the nature of relationships and the implication of connection became a great factor. The closer the tie and bond, the higher the chance of tagging. It is also notable that the nature of the relationship depends on its existence in both the online and offline realms. This highlights how social ties are a great factor in mentioning personal Instagram accounts.

“ya.. biasanya emang temen kelas, temen main, dan yang sering ketemu buat sekedar nongkrong, nugas gitu” (Participant 3)

[Translated: "Yeah... usually we're classmates, friends, and people who often meet to just hang out or do assignments, like that"]

“beberapa temen lama yang masih sering bareng aja” (Participant 8)

[Translated: "Some old friends who still hang out together often"]

“sama temen-temen yang udah biasa lah kenal satu sama lain, have fun baik di sosmed ataupun riil gitu” (Participant 7)

[Translated: "With friends who already know each other, have fun both on social media and in real life"]

Tagging people that they do not know in the offline world takes further consideration and personal evaluation of the reality of their relationship. For example, one of the participants explained, “Those who are close and already know me, would it be awkward if you didn't know me? It's like you'll pretend to know each other on social media, even though you're not close in real life.” (Participant 6). Having to be close and comfortable within the relationship is the dominant factor in tagging or mentioning people’s accounts in their Instagram Stories, as well as reposting Instagram Stories where they were tagged.

The process of tagging in formal relationships, such as the working environment or weak social ties, is a different matter. In formal relationships, the act of tagging goes hand in hand with the prevailing customs and norms within that scope. This applies both to tagging and reposting Instagram stories that are connected to formal social ties. The act of tagging formal connections is sometimes seen as a forced act. Like one of the participants sarcastically answered, “Workmates? Remember, there are no best friends at work! Even though sometimes I have no choice but to tag them” (Participant 7). Tagging people in formal relationships is mostly seen as appropriation, appreciation or respect for the connection. This type of tagging and reposting of formal ties can be seen as a process of merely maintaining social relationships.

Tagging and reposting Instagram Stories with weak ties are connected to the notion of respect and expression of gratitude in recurring public celebratory moments. In most cases, it is receiving gifts of appreciation from an employer or receiving gifts for religious holidays (Christmas gifts, Ied Al-Fitr gifts, etc.) that would lead them to post and tag in their Instagram Stories. Posting and acknowledging the sender is also thought to be the least that can be done; a few of the participants cried out:

“Aku menganggap diupload dan di tag (di media sosial) itu bare minimum sih, soalnya itu kan ga susah ya, dibanding effortnya dia untuk ngasih ke aku” (Participant 2)

[Translated: "I consider uploading and tagging (in social media) as a bare minimum, because it's not that difficult, right? compared to the effort of sending gifts"]

"Ya pasti ada sedikit rasa berharap untuk di repost, atau minimal say thank you aja sih buat menghargai" (Participant 3)

[Translated: "Yes, of course, I have hopes that my post would be reposted, at least to show gratitude and appreciation"]

Although posting and tagging in Instagram stories is a form of expressing respect and gratitude, there are reconsiderations of the action when it overlaps with the prevailing social discourse. One of the participants exclaimed, "If it's in the context of work, I'll think about it first. There are times when I'll just personally thank the person and won't upload the story; I fear it will be seen as a gratification" (Participant 6). This consideration is reasonable given the prevailing negative public discourse on the high rate of corruption through gratification.

When it comes to weak social ties, the prevailing social customs and norms dominate the act of tagging and reposting on Instagram Stories. This can be seen from the selected moments in which tags and stories are created and the discomfort deriving from contesting elements between personal desires and social norms.

The process of tagging and reposting is intertwined with the issues of social inclusion/exclusion and the building of relationship intimacy. Both of these issues are related to personal expectations as well as personal intentions/gains, leading to a display of emotions ranging from joy to jealousy or even resentment. Some of the participants have agreed upon tagging as a representation of popularity. Having to tag many accounts in their Instagram Stories, gives them a positive feeling of connection and popularity. The feedback from reposting is also found to be a validation of such connections and mutual feelings.

"Senang sih kaya nunjukin punya banyak kawan. Dan apalagi kalau di repost, kaya berbagi hal yang sama gitu" (Participant 7)

[Translated: "It's nice to show that you have lots of friends. And especially if it's reposted, it's like sharing the same thing"]

Most of the participants hope to have their stories reposted by people that they have mentioned. The act of reposting builds a notion of togetherness and a sense of belonging that seemed to be agreed upon. Reposting becomes a means of validation and recognition for the relationship. A mark of approval at the beginning of a new friendship, a mark of respect in weak ties, and a mark of mutual intimacy in strong social ties.

The pervasive meaning of validation and respect in the act of reposting has evolved into an unspoken digital ethic in Indonesian daily social media practices. It has become a common act that plays an important role and is an indicator in the dynamics of social interaction and connectivity. Such pervasiveness has led to a common practice for people to explain and apologize in advance when interacting with new networks in regard to reposting on Instagram. Informing new acquaintances that it may not be their common behavior to repost stories and stressing the fact that the lack of repost is not a mark of their disrespect or disapproval of the connection.

Reposting Instagram stories has added complexity to social interactions today. Its immersion to the mark of social bonds creates a culture that pressures people into an obligation to comply with digital practice. Hence, as we have seen from the practices of mentioning in weak social ties above, tagging and reposting are practiced even though people feel hesitant to mention or repost the Instagram stories. As one of the participants described their hesitancy, "Who knows, maybe I'm not important enough for them to tag or repost. Or they feel they must

repost my stories when I tag them, because I have found myself feeling obliged to repost stories that I have been tagged before” (participant 1).

As the practice of tagging and reposting Instagram Stories molds into a digital culture, it is also turning into a tool for relationship indicators. The act plays a big role in social inclusion and exclusion. Being mentioned and having to be reposted becomes a reflective process to social connectivity. The overthinking of connection and interaction is common among the participants, as one describes his thoughts on the lack of tagging and reposting as below:

“Pernah diinstastoryin, ada yg engga juga ada. Kalau ga diupload dan ditag aku bukan sekedar merasa ga dihargain tapi lebih ke ini aku sama dia ada apa ya? Malah kepikiran juga apa ada yang salah ya? Malu kali ya? Apa karena aku ya?” (Participant 8)

[Translated: "I've been storied, and also not. If it's not uploaded and I'm not tagged, it's not only that I don't feel appreciated, but rather I wonder what's going on with us? I wonder if there was something wrong? Maybe they're ashamed because of me? "]

The practice on Instagram stories turns into a tool of social inclusion and exclusion that intertwines with people's emotions. Jealousy and being excluded are common when it comes to Instagram stories. The practice of tagging and reposting stories are means of sharing moments and togetherness that often spike comparison in social bonds and connectivity.

*“jadi aku di posisi yang sampek kalau lihat temen ku di sosmednya pas nge tag yang lainnya sampek iri “lu keluar sama si A seruu banget, giliran ama gwe leptopan mulu ah.. kan t**k”* (Participant 2)

[Translated: "So I'm in a position where when I see my friend on social media, tagging someone else, I get jealous, its like "When you're with A, it's so much fun, but when you're with me, it's just always working on the laptop. That's just horrible"]

The importance of Instagram stories in today's connectivity has added complexity in today's social relationships. Between the roles of Instagram stories in social connectivity and intimacy, there is also a highlight on personal gratification in the correlation of social capital. Instagram stories with mentions and reposts often expand their personal recognition in a broader network. This is found favorable to many participants, as it may lead to new connections and followers which adds to their social capital in this digital era. Spontaneous response from other people that comments on the stories offers a sense of recognition like one of the participants describing their experience:

“Paling seneng sih kek. “Wahh senengnyaaa, dimana tuh tempatnya rekomin dongg tempat buat...” apa gitu.. Nah itu paling seneng sih” (Participant 4)

[Translated: I love it when someone responds "Wow, it looks fun, where is that? Can you recommend a place for..." whatever... Well, I like that most"]

Exploring the interviews on the act of tagging and reposting Instagram Stories shows a visible intertwining gratification and dynamics of social capital in the practice of social connectivity. Although further research centralizing this issue is needed to dive into the depth of digital social capital that is not centralized in this research.

CONCLUSION

The contemporary practice of daily connections intertwined with the culture of displaying such actions on social media has emerged as a significant facet within today's Indonesian digital society. The intricacies associated with such customs encapsulate varying layers of expression and representation that are richly embedded in the complex dynamics of the digital age.

It is apparent that tagging and reposting weight in the structuring and preservation of social ties and relationships. Contextually, in the digital ecosystem inhabited by the study participants, mediatization evolves into an inseparable component of this social construction and connectivity. Interweaving visual intimacy into the tapestry of social media discloses a multifaceted landscape that influences and shapes current social interactions and relationships. It is intertwined in the dynamics of relationship expectations, representations, and depth in correlation with the quality of the relationship bonds. A symbolic interplay that marks a space for recognition, appreciation, relationship evaluation, as well as the desire to connect in the digital era. Thus, the integration of social media practice in social interactions has shaped and continues to shape the portrayal of social connectivity in Indonesia's digitally-immersed society.

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