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Performance of Micro Celebrities: From Digital Meritocracy to Neoliberalism

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ABSTRACT

This study will look at how micro-celebrities are connected to the neoliberal environment that currently exists in the digital realm. This study also takes a media studies approach to examine how micro-celebrities in social media sites like YouTube and Instagram promote the myth of digital meritocracy. To further understand how two young women utilize their social media accounts to lead and attract attention, engagement, and apply industrialized celebrity manufacture, this research will compare two beauty influencers, @tasyafarsya (5.8 million Instagram followers, 4.2 million YouTube subscribers), and @inivindy (587 thousand Instagram followers, 1.96 million YouTube subscribers). This research using the multimodal discourse analysis method, and included semiotic visual investigation, in order to comprehend how texts and knowledge are arranged and formed by Beauty influencer through performativity and performance. The information for this study came from archival research that taken in period of January-May 2022 from Beauty influencer social media both in their Instagram and YouTube accounts. Thematic analysis and visual analysis were merged in order to examine how text and images depict discursive activities. The profound and significant findings of this study shatter the myth that individuals in positions of influence who reached the top came to believe that their achievement was completely their own doing. This study aims to investigate the cultural background of Indonesian digital influencers creates myth of digital meritocracy through their everyday posts. However, in reality, the emerging industrial culture on social media is also influenced by cultural logic related to people's financial statuses, family backgrounds, geographic places, and occupational history.

Keywords: *digital meritocarcy, neoliberalism, micro celebrity, beauty influencer, productive labor*

INTRODUCTION

A social media influencer is a person with a bigger social media following than the average person but a lesser following than a celebrity. They are also known as digital influencers or micro-celebrities. Microcelebrities use social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube to gain notoriety and present themselves as members of a selected group of people (Marwick, 2014, p. 114). Online interactions, which are facilitated by media like Instagram Live, synchronous replies, and comment responses, are essential for managing the personal popularity and branding of micro-celebrities (Annisa, 2022). In the end, achieving micro-celebrity status requires self-promotion rather than genuine performance. Microcelebrities are participants in a "attention industry," which fosters personal commodification and self-branding. It is interesting to note that "micro-celebrities" are sometimes perceived as common people who have thousands or even millions of followers on social media and connect with online audiences through "admiration, association, aspiration, or recognition" (Kutthakaphan & Chokesamritpol, 2013).

Instagram gives users the resources they need to create the self-portrait they want other people to see. Instagram has emerged as the ideal platform for persuading others because of its emphasis on aesthetic appeal. Because of this, those who become popular on Instagram are frequently referred to as micro and Internet celebrities and could be categorized as Influencers (Abidin, 2018). In this sense, Instagram might be seen as a venue for neoliberal self-regulation (Annisa, 2022). Beauty Guru influencer is a prime example of how self-representational depictions of celebrities have persisted in creating a notion that their rise to fame and reputation in society is based on their skill rather than their connections to family, fortune, or social standing. As a result of their brilliance and hard work, influencer success stories are regularly glorified. Digital celebrities having the time and resources to create content is another non-trivial asset, as it takes a lot of work to produce hundreds or thousands of video blogs and Instagram posts. In order to succeed on websites like YouTube and social media platforms like Instagram, one must devote significant time and resources into digital labour. Micro-celebrities may also be required to have access to specific resources, such as tools or locations, as well as to have the required knowledge or skills, such as training and support (Chang, 2020). This circumstance exposed the myth of the digital meritocracy.

Earlier research on YouTube's industrial factors was frequently done at the communication strategy, emphasizing the industrial rationale of operating around it or a technical and political economic analysis of the platform, and big data (Cunningham et al., 2016; Lobato, 2016; van Dijck, 2013). Studies from the previous research also demonstrate how digital influencers who portray their work as fun, simple, and honest can conceal less desirable aspects like the necessity of emotional labor, self-branding labor, and an always-on entrepreneurial mode of work. (Duffy & Wissinger,

2017). In another study, the cultural logic of the new sort of celebrity is extensively discussed, outlining how and in what ways it varies from conventional celebrities (Hou, 2019).

Celebrities are becoming a political concern, according to Littler (2004), who also discussed the present forms of celebrity culture. This is because celebrities expose and exacerbate glaring income and status disparities. How about right now? when two Indonesian Beauty Guru as micro-celebrities in YouTube channels and Instagram, portraying their successful careers as digital influencers as a result of their merit; talent, hard work, and commitment as digital labour. Long-standing fallacies about meritocracy are enhanced and innovated by digital meritocracy. Digital meritocracy as the idea that, despite historical, location-based material injustices, digital technologies can be used to evaluate an individual's success (Chang, 2020). The perpetuation of long-held misconceptions about education and personal social mobility occurs when meritocracy is made digital through personalization discourses that are ubiquitous. By shifting policy focus from physical to digital planes and from societal to individual issues, digital meritocracy hides attention to heightened racial and economic resegregation (Reardon & Owens, 2014).

However, in reality, digital influencers employ a myth of meritocracy and are captured in the vortex of neoliberalism's exploitation in the digital environment. This study begins by addressing the research question: How micro celebrities like Beauty Guru demonstrate a mixture of body performativity, digital meritocracy, and participatory to contribute their subjectivity on Instagram? This study intends to look into how Indonesian digital influencers use their regular posts to spread the concept of digital meritocracy as a result of their cultural backgrounds. The study also dispels illusions about a digital meritocracy based on the success of micro-celebrities using multimodal discourse analysis. This article also discusses micro-celebrities in the Beauty Guru genre and how "technology elites" (Noble & Roberts, 2022) collaborate with privileged individuals to highlight their accomplishments as successful and meritorious.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Micro-Celebrity and The Rise of Digital Meritocracy

An individual's access to economic rewards and/or political power under a meritocracy is determined by their skills, efforts, and successes rather than their social position or financial resources (Littler, 2017). Digital influencers are not an exception; they part of the digital meritocracy. What is referred to as a "meritocracy" is a social system that enables people to succeed proportionate to their knowledge and talents, as opposed to one in which social status or wealth is the dominant aspect (Allen, 2011). Advancement in such a system is contingent upon performance, as shown by testing

or demonstrable success. The notion that we live in a meritocracy is one of the most engrained and persistent fallacies (Allen, 2011; Lawton, 2000). The meritocracy hypothesis states that benefits are granted to people based on their own accomplishments rather than by the intervention of other factors such as their social standing or upbringing. The moral case for meritocracy is that it creates a successful and competent elite while giving everyone an equal chance to attain success.

Digital meritocracy in micro celebrities also employs this logic. Digital access is a significant resource for creating and spreading material that is both engaging and plentiful so that it may be monetized on sites like Instagram and YouTube. The ability to access and be knowledgeable about the creation of digital content is also influenced by own family wealth and educational background. This theory overlook the significant benefits of parental wealth and social standing as a result of this overemphasis. As mentioned by Littler, (2017) profound the celebrity culture as a case study because celebrities are the system's distributors. Celebrities unintentionally bombard us with images of their opulent lifestyles while simultaneously pressuring us to believe that they are worthy of their wealth and elevated positions. The logic of meritocracy leads us to collectively accept that only talent and merit are the factors that propel digital influencers to success—while ignoring the significant inequality in digital access, family wealth, educational background, and algorithms. Since individuals are in charge of developing their own brands, determining their own prices, and selecting the jobs they want to take on, people essentially become their own enterprises. People who possess certain talents will be paid for them and have access to the market. Anyone with intelligence and the ability to produce excellent work can get employment. The digital age supports self-employment, the ability of skilled workers to market themselves, find the jobs that are best for them, and select the professions that they enjoy (Chang, 2020).

Micro-Celebrities and the Logic of Neoliberalism

Bearing in mind the neoliberal perspective, there are linkages between YouTube, Instagram and internet celebrities as influencers. Since meritocracy has continuously been employed to support neoliberal capitalism, it is also a part of our common sense. The past few decades have seen an aggressive and creative exploitation of the meritocracy myth to uphold established privilege and quickly widen inequality. The idea of meritocracy has been used in a variety of contexts, including society and the logic of the digital environment. The fact that people who "succeed" and get to the top of the social hierarchy have historically received generous financial rewards is a major contributing factor to the issue. Meritocracy is structurally impossible because of this factor since it produces the exact opposite of an even playing field. For example, a digital influencer must produce fifty hours of video per week in order for YouTube to recognize them as content creators.

Micro-celebrities thus require attractive feeds, stunning photographs, specific technological equipment, as well as appropriate cosmetics, attire, and other materials to maintain their digital persona (Abidin, 2018; Dorschel, 2022). A Beauty Guru influencer is often portrayed as a young woman who is active, enthusiastic about the culture of celebrities, leads a stylish lifestyle, and works hard (Annisa, 2022). An Influencer at this period personifies the combined power of postfeminism and neoliberalism (Fitch & Third, 2010). Instagram's structure and organizational logic, as previously mentioned, make it the ideal platform for users to document and be acknowledged for showing these neoliberal qualities. By posting images of their fitness or beauty regimen, users can prove their devotion to the "endless labour on the self" necessary for neoliberal subjectivity (Gill, 2007a).

In contrast to "equal opportunity," "equality of result," or "anti-discrimination," the concept of meritocracy has always been intrinsically linked to capitalism, as noted in the 1950s by social theorists and philosophers including Raymond Williams (Littler, 2017). Social media, which is a component of neoliberalism's logic and the location of free competition for digital labor, including microcelebrities, in the modern world (Berry, 2014; Fuchs, 2008). Digital oligopolies like Google, Amazon, Youtube, and Instagram genuinely work like businesses with a lot of digital labor that rely on codes and algorithms whose operation is actually not entirely understood (Graham, 2017). Digital influencers give concrete instances of how they behave in the real world as opposed to a virtual one.

The stark contrast between meritocracy and the realities of the internet. It is interesting because in the last few decades, technological advancements have allowed us to democratize entertainment and content creation, leaving us at the mercy of the all-powerful and evasive "algorithm." In contrast to more traditional forms of entertainment like movies, television, and printed media, social media has made it possible for anybody with an internet connection to access and use these platforms for creation and consumption (Fuchs & Sevignani, 2013; Yao & Xu, 2019). It's simple to think that anyone can become an influencer given the significantly reduced entry barrier. The upshot of a meritocratic mentality is that those who succeed come to believe that their success is a reflection of their own merit and that those who fail to succeed have only themselves to blame. A main principle of common society is that everyone can succeed if they work hard enough, but it also contains the subliminal message that failing is a sign of futility, which is obviously a very dangerous fallacy.

The logic of neoliberalism, which advocates free-market economy, deregulation, and lower government spending, includes algorithms. Social media is a form of power technology, and corporations that use it to promote microcelebrities as neoliberal and algorithmic subjects (Hacon, 2017). Algorithms are the technical devices employed by social media sites to rank posts based on relevancy rather than when they were published. This enables users to order the information they view according to

how likely they are to interact with it. Social media platforms generate revenue by selling adverts. YouTube creators likewise primarily rely on sponsorships for funding, but they also have a second source of income from Google AdSense earnings.

Micro-Celebrities as Productive Labor in the Age of Social Media

Behind their self-entrepreneur employees are less desirable realities like the demands of emotional work, self-branding labor, and the constantly active style of entrepreneurial work. Together, these myths promote the notion that these professions are glamorous and that "productive labor" is what drives and concentrates cultural workers and people (Marotta, 2021). The personalizing of risk and general insecurity However, social media celebrities like bloggers, vloggers, and Instagrammers appear to have attained a long-held professional dream: they are compensated for doing what they enjoy. With these distinctions in mind, this section emphasizes the terrible influence of popular media discourse on the employment opportunities produced online.

The YouTube algorithm therefore evaluates the chances of a video creating a high level of attention. Additionally, through their Instagram accounts, Beauty Guru influencers receive feedback from their followers and viewers, which helps them organize the material they view based on how likely they are to connect with it. Micro celebrities must following the newest trends and issues in order to make their content relatable, in addition to making sure that their postings are engaging. The situation placed micro-celebrities as productive labor that needs to enhancing their work in everyday posts (Duffy et al., 2021).

Microcelebrities are a form of cultural production that highlights the importance of the work's visibility in determining its reputation, particularly in light of "new modes of visibility created by new media" (Bucher, 2012; Duffy et al., 2021) The "digital reputation economy," for example, has recognized predecessors in older systems of ranking and rating cultural objects, such as music charts and best seller lists, where reputation is also observed through visibility (Alison Hearn, 2010; O'Meara, 2019). Due to the fact that the media industry depends on subjectivity, which is intensifying in the digital age, (Gillespie, 2018; K.Baym, 2018) showed how biased technology is in the interim. The algorithm for measuring online reputation supported this. Influencer reputation in the digital arena is intimately tied to the quality production, capital flow, individual liberty, creativity, performance, and self-branding that are at the core of the present neoliberal agenda (Freeman, 2007).

The social media business has radically changed how capitalism produces new types of labour. Through integrated techniques of image-making, branding, and lifestyle marketing that were followed by the development of post-Fordist logic, the situation creates micro-celebrities as productive and immaterial labour (Gill & Pratt, 2008;

Ozgun, 2011). According (Postone, 1993) who asserts that time has a place in capitalism in the form of labor time, reproductive labor time, conflicts over the length of the workday, and absolute and relative surplus-value production that is founded on a labor-and-time dialectic. Social media, however, makes a difference in the digital age. The growth of capitalist social media, such Instagram and Youtube, has not rendered the ideas of work time and the law of value obsolete, but rather expresses new aspects of the labor theory of value.

Users create more profile, browsing, communication, behavioral, and content data the more time they spend on social media, and this data is sold to advertisers as a commodity (Fisher et al., 2014; Fuchs, 2015). Users can see more precisely tailored adverts the more time they spend online. This logic also applies to the factors that drive the prolific output of micro-celebrities; their output is influenced by the newest projects, keeps up with the current issues that are trending, and is promoted everyday.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

However, the focus of this paper is on how microcelebrities' accounts establish the idea of beauty. The purpose of the research was to study how the textual, visual, and aural components combined to generate meanings beyond the ostensible beauty themes in micro-celebrities posts that were published between March and July 2022. These two well-known people were chosen because they employ similar self-branding techniques on social media sites like Instagram and YouTube vlogs. Lifestyle, makeup specialists, and young women portraying themselves as mothers are some of the categories connected to Beauty Guru.

In addition to makeup reviews, these micro-celebrities' daily posts typically feature themes about family, self-branding, women's empowerment, and make-over challenges. Involved gathering and recording data during the course of the six-month research phase. I examined each internet celebrity's account using more than thirty photographs (and related text) as well as comments left by followers. Thirty one of the more than sixty chosen images were examined in full. Based on the objectives of the study, which were influenced by its concepts and assumptions, images were chosen for examination. The emphasis was on comprehending how micro celebrities like Beauty Guru give their subjectivity to Instagram through a combination of bodily performativity, digital meritocracy, and the visibility of productive labor

This study integrates critical discourse analysis with multimodal analysis to create a comprehensive framework for comprehending how discourses are transmitted across a variety of semiotic resources, modes, and genres (Machin, 2013). A multimodal approach is necessary to integrate these various components because it not only considers how language reflects particular beliefs and values but also takes into account how visual aspects and elements contribute to meaning (Kress, 2012). Thus, this re-

search considers visual performances as expressing particular meanings in addition to language as text.

In order to replicate specific discourse about the body, self-recognition, and self-expression, this research also examines editing decisions, lighting and colour schemes, attire, and time spent on micro-celebrities. Microcelebrities also "celebrate" individual freedom of choice, reproducing women subjectivity and identity while bolstering the widely held belief that bodily autonomy is a physical representation of personal responsibility. This approach is motivated by the social semiotic theory, which contends that language and visual communications both actively shape and sustain cultural norms and values (Fernández-Fontecha et al., 2019; Machin & Mayr, 2012).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Micro-celebrities and self-branding work

Less favourable realities like the needs of emotional work, self-branding labour, and the constantly active method of entrepreneurial work are hidden behind their self-entrepreneur workers. Together, these myths support the idea that these fields are glamorous and that "productive labour" is what motivates and focuses cultural workers and individuals. widespread insecurity and the personalization of risk. However, social media stars like bloggers, vloggers, and Instagrammers seem to have realized a long-held professional goal: They get paid to do what they love. Taking these differences into account, this part highlight the horrendous role of popular media discourse on career possibilities created online.

This part draws on a qualitative analysis of @inivindi and @tasyaFarasya accounts to reveal how these influencers circulated a series of patterned mythologies about creative work in the age of social media. Such narratives about the fun, freedom, and authentic nature of their self-starter careers hide less favourable realities, including the demands of emotional work, self-branding work, and the ever-active mode of entrepreneurial work (Abidin, 2017; Duffy & Wissinger, 2017). Together, these myths help perpetuate the image of glamour in the industry as part of a "dispositive creativity" that disciplines and incites cultural workers.

The most well-known Beauty Guru influencer Tasya Farasya depicts her extravagant life through the Gucci challenge, which became popular on social media in May 2022. Tasya demonstrated her capability and ability by dressing beautifully, accessorizing opulently, wearing an authentic blazer, and carrying a Gucci bag while undergoing a makeover challenge. Her appearance displays not just her skill to apply makeup and change her appearance, but also her standing as a member of the wealthy, prosperous, and privileged society. One characteristic of an internet celebrity that is essential

for audience exposure is exclusivity. To grab their attention, it shocks and stimulates spectators (Abidin, 2018). Exclusivity is not available to everyone because it is only available to those with money and luxury.

The consistency of her posts can also be noticed in pictures 1 and 2, where Tasya's supporters have celebrated and supported her for participating in Makeover Challenge as well as for expressing herself in an elitist fashion. This picture 1 post invited 531,467 likes and picture 2 invited 433,468 likes. Social media is a major platform for self-expression and a key component of participatory culture (Jenkins et al., 2016). The variety of comments made by Tasya's fans can be viewed as a component of participatory culture, which portrays fans as active participants who consciously choose to communicate their thoughts to their role model rather than merely as passive viewers.
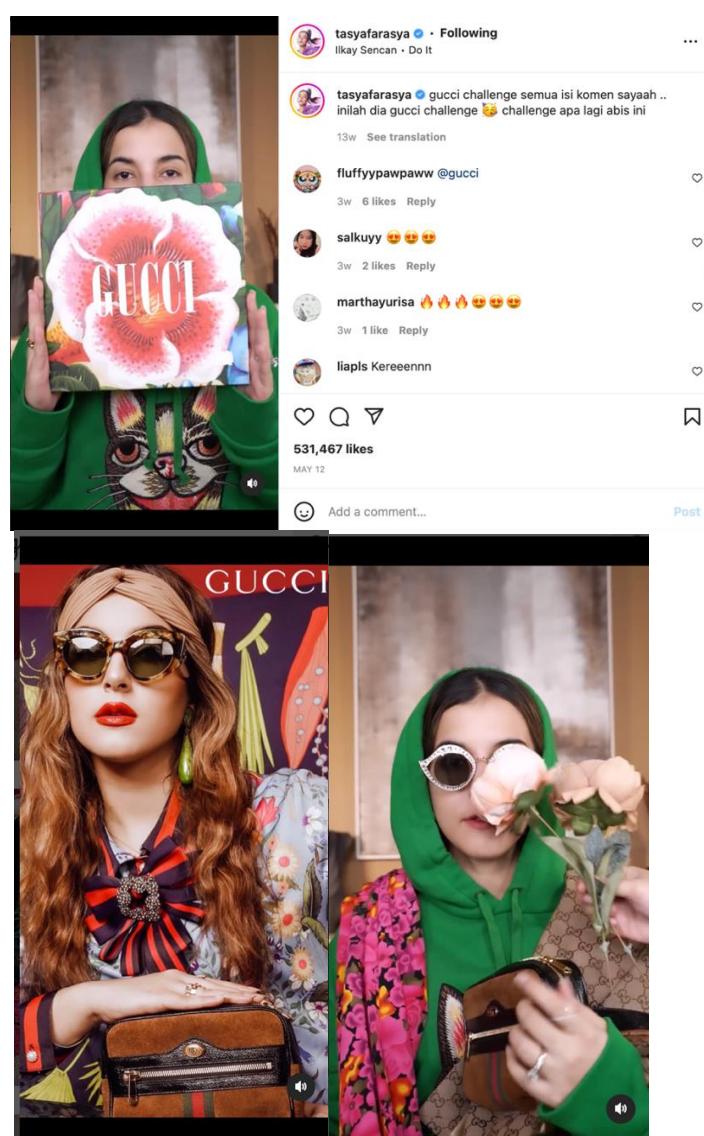
Picture 1: Tasya Farasya performed the Gucci challenge in May 2022.
She participated in a challenge that went viral on Instagram and Tik Tok.
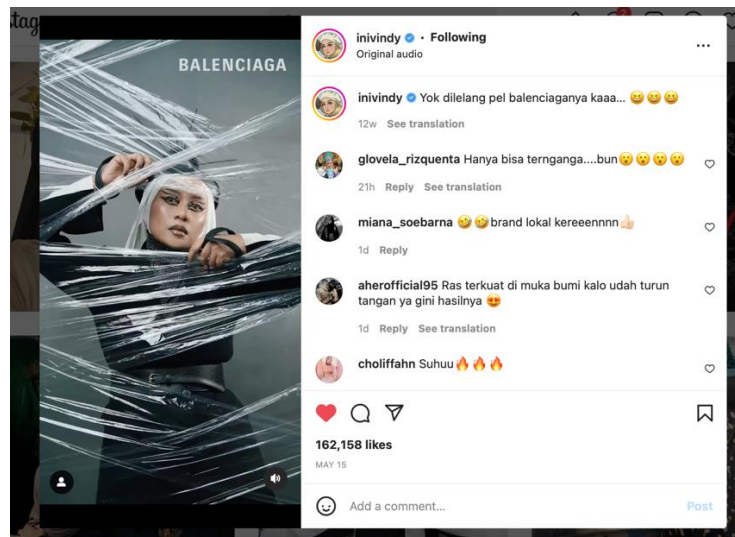Posted 12 May 2022

Picture 2: She has the luxury of using authentic Gucci
clothing and accessories in her short video challenged.
Posted 13 May 2022
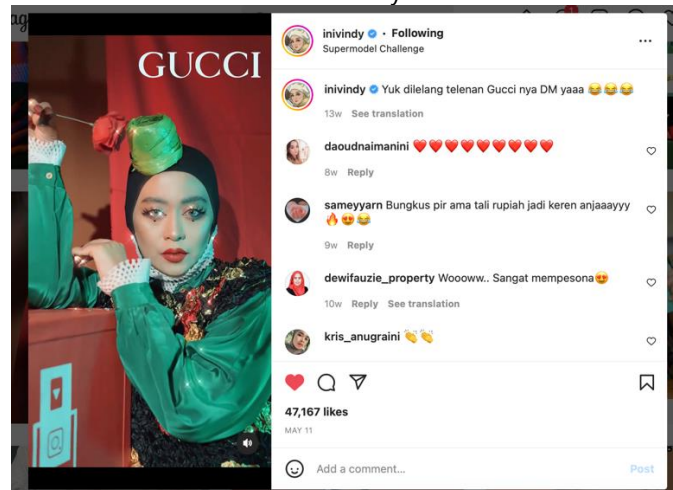
Picture 3. Vindy produce Reels video Gucci challenged content
Posted 11 May 2022

Picture 4: Vindy post picture her Gucci challenged with DIY (do it yourself)
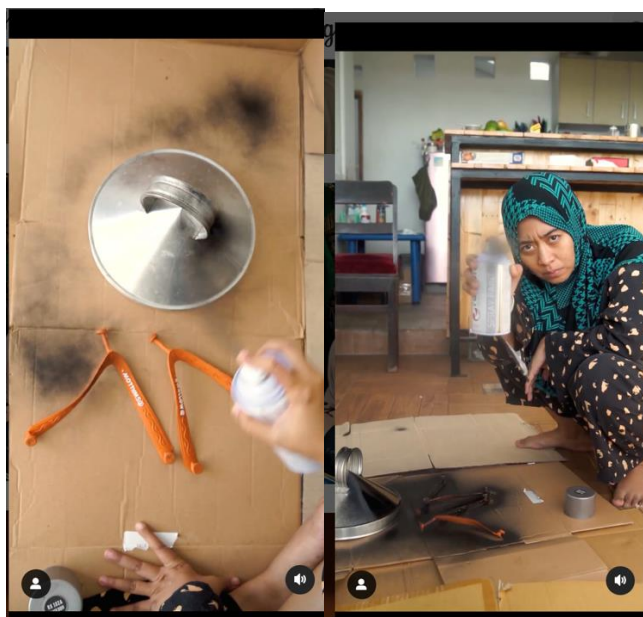Posted 13 May 2022

Figure 5. Vindy post picture her Balenciaga challenged with DIY (do it yourself)
Posted 15 May 2022

Another Beauty Guru influencer, Harfrida Vindy Agustie, also takes part in the Gucci challenge in May 2022. She is more often known on Instagram and YouTube as Ini Vindy. When Vindy used "do it yourself" projects as part of her show case rather than only participating in Makeover Challenge, the scene in her short video. Presenting @inivindy accounts as productive and creative digital labour while parodying and mocking herself as ordinary people. Working from scratch, Vindy and her team create a variety of do-it-yourself tools to support and provide her video. Vindy's position when applying makeup was disputed since it was outside of the extravagant lifestyle that internet influencers frequently displayed. In addition to posing for the Gucci-challenged, Vindy purposefully recorded a video showing the steps she took to get ready for the picture shoot. In short video, she uses household items like mops and saucepan lids as well as brightly coloured raffia straps, flip sandals, and imitation low-cost hijabs from well-known brands to demonstrate her commitment as a creative influencer. Vindy also noted that, unlike other influencers, she did not have the financial ability to purchase designer products like Gucci and Balenciaga. Parodying and mocking the challenged are part of @inivindy Beauty Guru digital influencer positioning.

This Reels gone viral across social media including in Tik Tok, YouTube and Facebook. After that she is invited by National TV program in Jakarta to present her ability in makeover and produce unique video through DIY (do it yourself) equipment's as part of her creative works. Her Gucci challenged produce 47,167 likes and 1,778 comments. She also produces Balenciaga challenge another video two days following her popular one. Interestingly, another factor that contributed to her video's success was Vindy's ability to parody her inability to purchase Gucci's upscale accessories including bags, clothing, and accessories like scarves. In the end, she appears to be

mocking herself for not being able to afford luxury brands like other internet celebrities. Vindy positioning creates exceptionalism (Abidin, 2018), which is another essential attribute for micro celebrities. It denotes the status of having uncommon skills or abilities and being distinctive. These Internet celebrities are famous because they have talents that few others do. Internet celebrities are eager to display and reveal their "authentic" selves on Instagram. Therefore, they must have the abilities and capacity to continually feel different.

Following trends, such as those involving unusual challenges, specific thematic makeup, and extreme apparency, is one way that micro-celebrities keep up with the most recent trending topic. When a digital influencer's work is related to post-Fordist logic, where flexibility, nomadism, and spontaneity are essential for participating in the current trend and demands, they are considered to be a component of the digital labour market. Post Fordism is the antithesis of the Ford factory's guiding principle, which argues for labour-intensive standardization of the machines when they are being manufactured. Themes of alienation brought on by industrialized labour were heavily inspired Marxist ideology. However, a new economic structure emerged throughout the Post-Fordist period (Vallas, 1999).

Fordism has been replaced in the modern era by post-Fordism as a result of the growth of neoliberal global supply chains (de Peuter, 2014). The successor to Fordism, post-Fordism, doesn't adhere to any of its production or consumption practices. Uniqueness and fluidity are two traits shared by the post-Fordist labour market. The way Post Fordism creates a new kind of capitalism transforms the ideas of "productive labour" and "economic value," allowing creative worker output to be immediately transformed into "productive" economic resources through integrated techniques of image-making, branding, and lifestyle marketing (Ozgun, 2011). It is clear from the two influencer posts by the Beauty Guru that the idea of micro-celebrities as a productive workforce needs to be regularly promoted. Without ignoring to promote self-branding as a necessary mode in the digital world that embraces intimacy, digital creative labor emphasizes exposure as an endeavor to continuously achieve popularity.

"Just Being Me": Micro-Celebrities and The Myth of Digital Meritocracy

Without exception, these jobs as influencers and digital celebrities are very vulnerable to the cancel culture situation. This culture has been known for its past few years, particularly on social media, putting celebrities, companies, and media under the control of the audience in a true "moral and ethical truth." It can be very subjective and biased. On the contrary, it is not to talk about work based on "personas and characters" like influencers in this digital space turns out to have a lot of risks. Not only a matter of cancel culture, bullying but they also have very long working hours,

uncertainty of the market situation and even the absence of pension guarantees and health. The logic of the free market is also what then makes influencer life not only as a commodity of large corporations called social media, but also puts them in place as a precarious worker (worker who is always in a difficult situation) (Benach et al., 2014). However, it is not surprising that digital influencers will constantly strive to portray the best image. It may be determined how the definition of "simply being me" becomes an engaging topic to discuss through glamorous Instagram posts and creative YouTube videos.
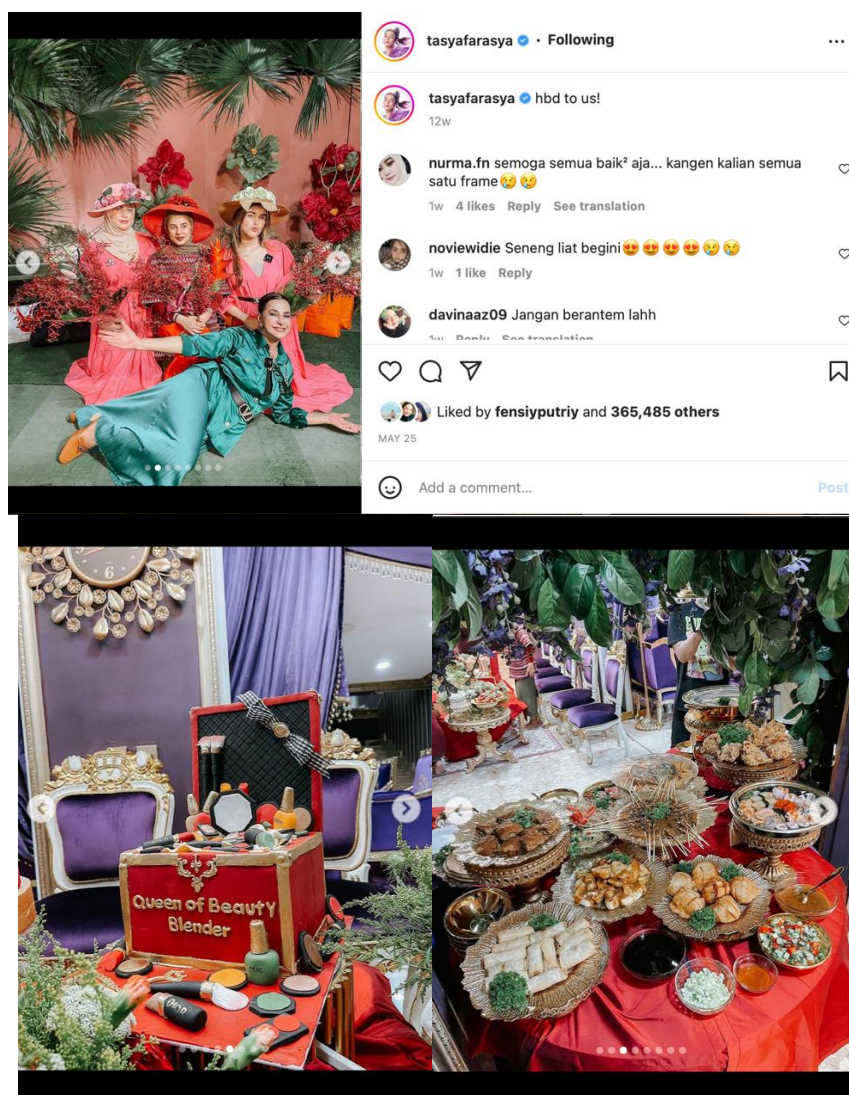

Picture 6 : Tasya posted a series of images to demonstrate how
her family celebrated her, her twins, and her elder sisters' birthdays.
Posted 25 May 2022

Picture 7. Tasya shows off her mother's opulent mansion, which has a castle-like appearance.
Posted 26 March 2022

This is evident in images 6 and 7 where Tasya reveals her wealthy family background and draws admiration from her followers. Given her exceptional lifestyle compared to the average person, it is difficult to conclude that their success is solely the result of her work. Social mobility, which is more closely associated with meritocracy, is the capacity to move up or down the social ladder. Early on, meritocracy lays a lot of attention on the effects of the external environment, but in reality, meritocracy also considers factors like family background and the individual's internal environment. For instance, social mobility is greatly influenced by education and is likely to be constrained in society where educational inequality is present from a young age. Parents would prioritize giving their children a best education, spending more for additional training, fostering a nice environment, and giving them nourishing clothing and food when considering access to their children's to the higher level of life, experience, and competition.
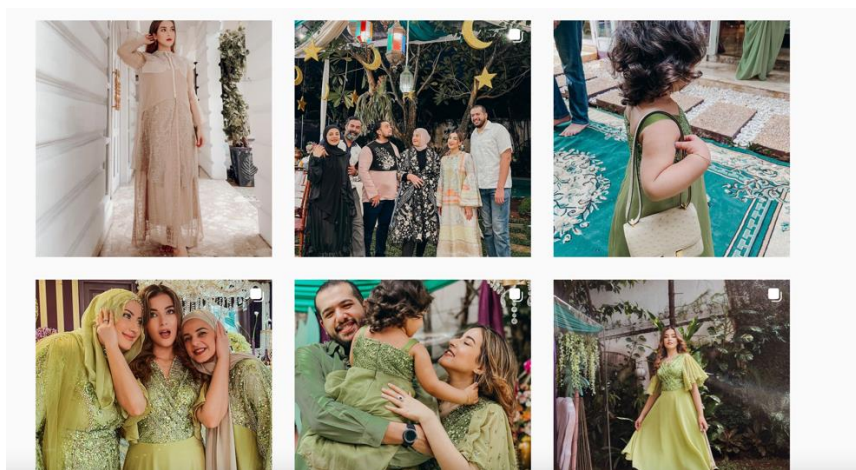
Picture 8. Tasya Farasya's family members can be seen in recaps of her Instagram account and when Tasya celebrating her daughter birthday in the luxurius hotel.
Posted on length May - July 2022

Picture 9. Tasya Farasya post as her socialite circle in Jakarta
Posted 25 March 2022

Working with family is a regular topic of Tasya Farasya's posts on her Instagram and YouTube channels. As seen in pictures 7 and 8, Tasya exemplifies how prosperous and privileged her family is. Again, a significant part of support from her fans has been expressed in comments expressing the economic disparity between many ordinary Indonesians and the wealthy and prosperous Tasya family. Working with family is a frequent background for Indonesian internet celebrities who present themselves as the perfect person who lived in Indonesian communal societies. Therefore, family influencer also common in Indonesian internet celebrities contents. Family influencers frequently reveal and imitate the standardization of family achievement while also publishing excerpts from their private lives as an operational family (Abidin, 2017). In addition to inviting her family to collaborate on her contents, Tasya frequently takes pictures of her posts with well-known and successful internet celebrities, which further supports her elite and exclusive surroundings among celebrities. Picture 9 shows Tasya portraying her successful career while surrounded by other rich and beauti-

ful young women. She also mentioned Nagita Slavina as one of the most well-known celebrities on the Indonesian YouTube channel in her caption image.

Ini Vindy portrays her social status as regular people as compared to Tasya Farasya, but she also captures her talent and capability to achieve micro-celebrities status. Vindy adopted a similar technique, giving herself a challenging makeover, adopting current makeup trends, and frequently inviting her family to participate in collaborative projects. However, it is clear from Vindy's regular posts that she prefers to present herself as an everyday person who gave up her job to become a successful content creator from scratch. Vindy once acknowledged on her YouTube video that she started working as a content creator independently by setting up a YouTube channel and posting regularly to her Instagram since she had a financial crisis after her husband was fired from her job. Vindy believes that by utilizing her abilities and knowledge from her prior position as a digital officer, she will be able to save his family's financial situation (see @inivindy YouTube channel posted in 2018 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmxnS9HsLew).

Picture 10. Vindy collaborates with her sister on makeup challenges.
Posted 13 April 2022
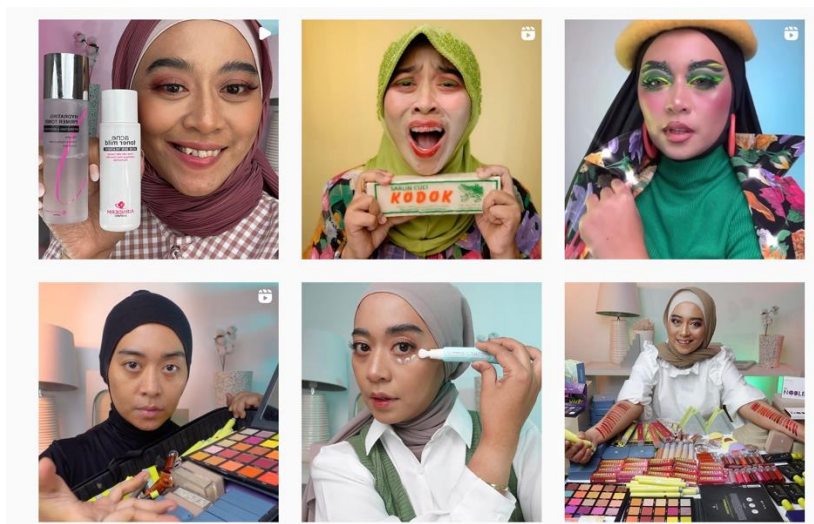
Picture 11. @inivindy Instagram feed portrays her individual image as regular person who
achieved micro-celebrities
Posted on length May - July 2022
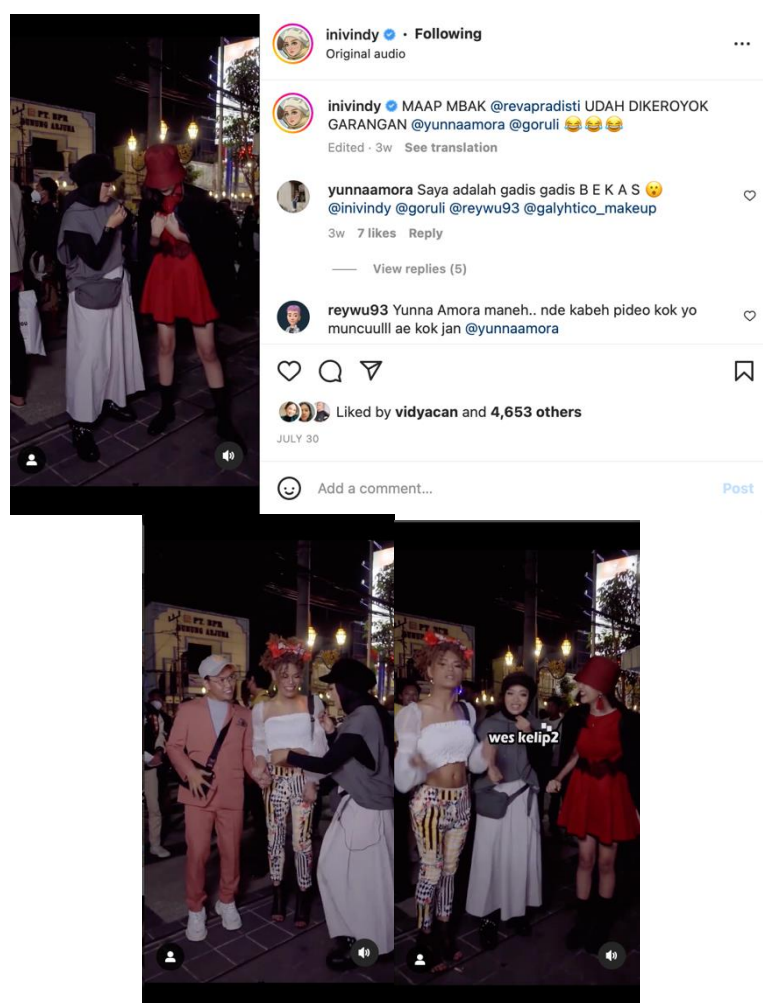
Picture 12. Screen shoot picture from @inivindy short video on her Instagram
Posted 30 July 2022

Vindy also frequently invited local micro-celebrities that are represented in her city of Malang, East Java, to her @inivindy Instagram and YouTube accounts. Vindy, in contrast to Tasya, who lived in central Jakarta. Vindy located in a region of Java Island that is geographically and socially significantly different from Tasya's circumstances. The potential and social financial reach are obviously extremely different when working with local influencers. This has a significant impact on how popular a Vindy in online arena (see picture 12, @inivindy interviewing local influencer in her city of Malang-East Java). Naturally, Vindy finds it more challenging to overcome the algorithm's design flaws when working exclusively with local celebrities.

Obviously, Tasya Farasya, who very effortlessly takes images and collaborates with national artists who are in Jakarta, is inversely proportionate to this circumstance. Because of their cultural backgrounds, Indonesian digital influencers use their regular

posts to disseminate the idea of digital meritocracy, as can be seen in the daily posts of microcelebrities on YouTube and Instagram. However, in reality, cultural logic connected to people's financial situations, familial backgrounds, geographical locations, and occupational experiences also has an impact on the rising industrial culture on social media.

Instagram's structure and organizational logic, as previously mentioned, make it the ideal platform for users to document and be acknowledged for showing these neoliberal qualities. By posting images of their fitness or beauty regimen, users can prove their devotion to the "endless labor on the self" necessary for neoliberal subjectivity (Annisa, 2022; Gill & Pratt, 2008). Influencer and beauty expert Ini Vindy explores her abilities as a creative worker who is highly productive to demonstrate her Master quality in using her high ability skills. Vindy in this instance demonstrated not only her attractive appearance through her makeover, but also distinctive, extreme event entertaining daily contents.

Instagram appears to provide everyone an equal chance to work and succeed, but in truth, both Instagram and Youtube are a product of the capitalist model. With this point of view, in the new period of the economic system, labour cannot be valued equally or have access to the same capital. As explained above, even though Tasya Farasya and Ini Vindy belong to the same genre as Beauty Guru Influencers, their profiles can be compared to show that they have extremely distinct family backgrounds, social capital, and financial resources. From the analysis above we can undertands how finding fame, finding reputation and creating self-branding on digital world can not be separated from the situational of individual. The idea of a "digital meritocracy" seems to be little more than a phrase used to cover up actual injustices and disparities. Instagram and Youtube support celebrity culture, which is the general term for the world's fascination with the personal lives of famous people. It also makes reference to how news about celebrities' personal lives is continually publicized by the media, keeping it in front of our eyes. Digital meritocracy, of course, exacerbates the divide in people's lives by encouraging competition for fame.

The algorithm offers a whole new layer regarding who sees what because each person's home page and recommendations will be based on their own viewing and consumption patterns (Bishop, 2020; Carah & Angus, 2018). Meritocracy and its connections to the current digital environment. First of all, creating material on the internet definitely requires some work, but with the complexity of algorithms, there is undoubtedly a lot more involved. In order to succeed on social media platforms, there is also a certain amount of privilege that is required or at the very least useful. Being conventionally attractive, or what people now commonly refer to as pretty privilege, is one prominent example. Working in digital ege, micro-celebrities needs to enhance their creativity to attract attention. Additionally, (Kabanda, 2016) shows how every sector of society now has access to digital media, including the arts, politics,

commerce, and religion. Digital tools have significantly altered how artistic work is created and consumed in the modern day. Digital technology can be wonderful when used properly, but when mishandled, it can undermine human advancement.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

According to Gill, (2007b), the emergence of so-called "self entrepreneurship" was foreshadowed by the ongoing rise of the autonomous workforce, which coincided with a lot of talk about the advantages of social media platforms for "discovery" and "making a living off its own passion projects." With this context, it is impossible to separate the language of productive labor from the genre of social media production that concentrates on the Beauty Guru arena. The effort put forth by Beauty Guru influencers is demonstrated by digital meritocracy, as shown by the analysis above, which positioned micro-celebrities as productive workers who must build their own self-branding. This article's key finding demonstrates that while striving for success and producing results are crucial, mythical representations of the digital meritocracy also exist. From Additionally, self-entrepreneurship is a product of neoliberal logic, which views each individual as performing emotional labour and uses social media as a platform for competition. A new digital meritocracy is emerging. The idea that measuring our "impact" on social media is a beneficial activity for society. It does not matter that many influential people are not even on YouTube, or Instagram. And disregard the fact that the quantity of responses to a piece of material is the sole way to determine its quality. This is because, success in internet is equated with popularity.

Furthermore, digital labour like micro celebrities depending on algorithm, it will permit more or less impressions, which are chances for viewers to see that video and click on it, helping to increase income and popularity. In order to optimize earnings, the algorithm will essentially promote content that has a track record of success. It's quite difficult to forecast how well a video will perform because success is determined by so many indicators, including but not limited to views, interaction in comments, and the number of likes. At times, it almost seems like the algorithm just does what it wants. Digital influencers may thus classify industrialized, commercial media production as a type of productive labour within the neoliberal economy. Two digital influencers in the field of beauty, @tasyafarsya (5.8 million Instagram followers, 4.2 million YouTube subscribers), and @inivindy (587 thousand Instagram followers, 1.96 million YouTube subscribers), have conducted studies, that their popularity and achievement in digital influencer cannot be separated from the varied familial backgrounds, social networks, and financial resources that support their efforts to succeed.

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