



Leisure necessities and symbolic meaning of traveling through habitus on social media

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Abstract

Social media allows people to share what they do in the real world through their posts on social media. However, what they present online are not based on reality. Posts on social media increasingly illustrate differences in social status because even though the posts are on the same topic and category, they show different tastes. Through Bourdieu's thought that tastes are determined by social structure, this study aimed to explore how a person's consumption, especially traveling, can change due to habitus in social media. Consumption in Bourdieu's explanation is no longer determined by economic factors, but by culture. Cultural practices in technology play a role in changing consumption patterns in society. As a Symbolic Convergence Theory that builds simulations and social space, social media conversations create distinctions in society. The narrative method used to understand individuals' experiences are subjective and interpreted in their world, so they have an objective impact. Interviews were carried out with Indonesian travelers who provided recommendations for their followers who have the same interests in traveling. In addition, the netnography method was carried out to see the meaning of traveling in modern society. This study shows that traveling has become a symbol. This change in traveling consumption provides confirmation for social media as a process of transformation through habitus.

Keywords: *Habitus, tastes, conversation, consumption, travel, social media*

INTRODUCTION

Social media has made people able do whatever they want in the real world. People will travel to places they have never visited, eat in unique places, cook new and unique recipes, do sports that are trendy, and attend music concerts abroad with the aim of displaying them on social media (Barker Nathian & Rodriguez, 2019). People show themselves through what they posted such as status updates, photo sharing, profiles, hashtags, and other features provided on social media (Raditya Pratomo et al., 2020). However, what they present on social media are not often based on natural things or, in other words, they just present an image (Oluwakemi & Özdemir, 2020, Triputra et al., 2020). In fact, people determine tourist destinations because of references or inspiration from other people through social media (Iglesias-Sánchez et al., 2020). For example, there are comments from social media users on Instagram showing a desire to travel that arises from travelers' posts:

- @xxx It makes me want to dive again
- @xxxx I want to take a photo like this at Novus Jiwa
- @xxxxx Let's come here when you guys are free
- @xxxxxx Cool idea, climbing but in the water

Thus, peoples' consumption is done not always of their own will or desire, but out of encouragement (from other people's posts). In addition to the role of others who are in their social media network, the need to be perceived by others also determines what people consume. Through visuals or photos posted, people want to convey messages through certain symbols indicating their social status, economic, or cultural class (Yates & Lockley, 2018).

The reality of social media today shows and explains a person's class status. Even though the posts are on the same topic and category, they show different tastes. In the travel category, for example, people with high tastes will choose luxurious tourist sites, whereas people with low tastes will choose areas with low budgets. According to Bourdieu, a person's taste is determined by the social space in which a person is, which is characteristic of their social structure (Wardhana, 2021). Bourdieu further explained that a person's practices occur through a habitus process, namely, changes that occur when a person is in a certain field.

This study is important because the phenomenon of increased consumption of traveling is growing. In Indonesia, this trend is shown by increases in the number of domestic and outbond tourist trips from 2021 to 2025 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022). In addition, #travel was one of the top four hashtags on Instagram (Instagram, 2021), which shows people's interest in traveling content through keywords or topics as an index that can be useful for social media users (Ta'amneh & Al-Ghazo, 2021).

Table 1. Indonesia Domestic Tourism Statistic in Million

Year	Total Trips (in million)
2021	613,30
2022	734,68
2023	825,80
2024	1020,00
2025	1200,33

Source: Author's processing of data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), National Tourism Statistics 2023-2025.

The phenomenon of an increasing number of Indonesians traveling both domestically and abroad every year reflects their consumption patterns. Increased consumption signifies a rising trend where consumption extends beyond mere activities and destinations. It encompasses the entirety of expenditures incurred from the initial planning phase throughout the period of the journey.

Technology consumption is evident as people use social media to search for information (Yuan et al., 2021) and dedicated applications for bookings (Krishananto & Iqbal, 2025). Another form of consumption relates to the equipment needed to support the visual perfection of social media posts, such as clothing, accessories, local food, and other items, consequently transforming the act of traveling into a consumption behavior (Asyraf, 2025).

Statistical insights into the growth of tourism can also indicate future consumption trends within the Indonesian population regarding travel. In essence, traveling should serve as an individual occasion for leisure, where individuals are free to determine their destinations independently, without the influence of 'tastes' shaped by external factors. Such a scenario, if realized, would primarily benefit the entities responsible for defining those 'tastes'

Table 2. Indonesia National Tourism Statistic in Million

Year	Total Trips (in million)	Data Status
2022	3,54	Jan-Dec
2023	7,51	Jan-Dec
2024	8,94	Jan-Dec
2025	8,34	Jan-Nov

Source: Author's processing of data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS),
Indonesia Outbond Tourism Statistics 2023-2025

What people consume does not just happen, but through a process that involves a set of systems in society that induces it. Referring to Marx, capitalists control the system so that people's practices are constructed practices (Schmitt et al., 2022). Capitalists, namely people who have the ability to produce and distribute products, construct what people consume due to a person's economic ability. Through the brand, specific products create a difference, categorizing layers in society. In other words, what people consume shows the difference in a person's class status. Capitalism thus drives the transformation of people's practices where they no longer consume goods based only on their utility.

If Marx's view of materialism focuses on economic factors, Bourdieu through his cultural studies goes beyond this thought. Consumption practices are no longer based on economic ability; rather, it is the culture that determines what people consume. Cultural symbols include behavior, taste, knowledge, practices, goods, and other deliverables that are used to indicate cultural exclusion (Bourdieu, 1993). Referring to Bourdieu's theory, namely the field of cultural production, cultural symbols such as art, branded products/goods, as well as tourism are circulated and consumed, built from a set of social conditions.

For Bourdieu, people's consumption practices are based on tastes and lifestyles that are related to class (Hu & Cheong, 2021). This behavior has shifted moral values in traditional times and has become a feature of today's society. Thus, Bourdieu's cultural model illustrates that consumption has a social logic that explains differences in what is consumed according to social class.

The model for practicing change in this context is consumption, which in Bourdieu's cultural model involves habitus, capital, and field. This model is understood as interrelated parts and not a one-way mechanism. The following is an explanation of how habitus, capital, and field work in transforming practices. Habitus is about how (the way) to be (Negacz, 2021). As an assimilated past without clear awareness, habitus is an internal history of personal experience based on different aspects of individuals' social journey. The process within individuals, through interactions and deep engagement in a field, ultimately becomes one of the determinants of individuals' practices. Habitus is a summary of social practices through dispositions which can be broadly explained as the evolving processes by which individuals act, think, understand, and approach the world and their role in it. Habitus is the mental process of awareness and behavior in individuals, while capital is the effort or access for a transformation to occur.

Capital is complex and can take many forms. In Bourdieu's model, capital has four forms, namely economic (resources related to financing), cultural (assets in the form of non-financial), social (a person's social network), and symbolic (prestige and recognition). The distribution of capital then determines the objective level in a field.

A field, according to Bourdieu, is social life in which a series of broad processes continuously take place in space (Kadrow & Muller, 2019). The environment becomes the life of individuals in their collectivity where they interact with each other. Sharing information is an activity done so that each one gains knowledge. Through this behavior, people will live in networks. Therefore, individuals in Bourdieu's model are agents who produce knowledge. Individuals' practices in social life are guided by internal dispositions (*habitus*), which are considered from internal criteria in group or field activities (Turnbull et al., 2019).

Bourdieu himself did not specifically state technology, especially in the field. Yet, technology in modern society has become a space for sharing information among users, interacting, and living in networks (Rewindinar et al., 2019). Technology also enables social discourse to become a social space (Rewindinar et al., 2020).

The emphasis on the transformation process that occurs through Bourdieu's thought is through individual and social relations. The *habitus* process thus involves an internalization process that occurs within individuals and also their externalization process in their environment (Atkinson, 2021). Bourdieu places individuals as active agents who can make decisions about what to consume. Here, Bourdieu reveals that individuals are agents who carry out a process within themselves that is determined by the social world in which they reside. Because of the agent's position, the agent will eventually be structured. Nevertheless, Bourdieu's thought becomes a bridge in seeing the dichotomy between agent and structural relations.

Habitus explains the understanding and practice of representing subjectivity and objectivity in the social world (Piroddi, 2021). Subjectivity is associated with the world of individuals as social beings who understand reality according to their experiences and life contexts. On the other hand, the objective world can be seen as a world that is outside the influence of individuals themselves, namely through social, economic, cultural, institutional, and power structures in which individuals and collective practices are contextualized. Further, Bourdieu explained that cultural practices through the media play a role in changing consumption patterns in society (Jakobsson et al., 2021). Cultural competencies, such as knowledge and language as a process of communication, build simulations and social space to create differentiation in society. Technology, referring to social media, has resulted in an evolution of communication. Changes in the production and distribution of messages occur because media connected to the Internet provides an interactive space for its users. Individuals in the media produce and consume messages in the form of text, ideas, and visual content. Production and consumption of content as a convergence culture is due to the faded nature of the media (Fordham et al., 2022)



There is social logic within the cultural practices on social media. Social logic talks about how and why sharing has become commonplace, while cultural practice is the participatory culture of the users on social media. Social media provides access to an audience, who can participate openly, thus increasing sharing practices (Prisgunanto, 2020). Sharing information is a characteristic of social media. With individual networks that are intertwined via the Internet, the media is a source of information for everyone. Through messages and content produced, the media can mobilize information that is needed according to people's interests (Suryandari dan Rahmawati, 2023). Thus, technology, through messages, provides access to information (Breiby et al., 2020).

The media circulation model is hybrid, so social media can easily circulate messages (Lai, 2019). Content production is the distribution of messages through content processing to suit the context and audience network. Contents as individuals' dispersed experiences, created through various materials are then disseminated for different purposes. The audience creates the context with different motivations. Economic, social, and cultural factors motivate users and facilitate sharing.

In addition to motivation, the ability of people to process messages is a factor for a person to be able to influence others. The product of the creation of meaning can then drive consumption. Content production is defined by Mosco as communication work which Hesmondhalgh later analyzed as cultural work (Sum & Jessop, 2015). Cultural work is carried out through the process of creating meaning related to the social world.

From Bourdieusian perspective, action is conceptualized as a dialectical relationship between internal and the external. Study demonstrates that the decision to travel is significantly influenced by advertising (Trivedi and Sama, 2022). Influencers utilize promotional strategies to entire audiences toward tourism (Papadimitriou, D., et al, 2023). Social media platforms curate engaging content to drive travel interest (Prastya et al., 2023).

Furthermore, drawing upon Symbolic Convergence Theory, this research posits that shifts in behavior occur through communication processes between the individual and their social environment. The interactive features of social media, particularly the capacity for real-time conversation, serve as a significant catalyst for individual action. By engaging in digital discourse with other users, individuals are often nudged toward specific behaviors highlighting the transformative power of social connectivity within virtual space.

This study aimed to explore consumption, as a person's taste that has been determined through habitus on social media, specifically looking at changes in leisure consumption through traveling conversation

METHOD

To understand the meaning of tourism constructed through the online social world, this study employed the Netnography method. Netnography is a qualitative data collection method through social media that focuses on meaning (Kozinets, 2010). This study design allows the researchers to analyze how people interpret their own expressions in online social interactions within networks. Therefore, the nature of meaning is highly subjective and relates to the environment and culture (Fitri Adona et al., 2022). Netnography operates within the context of computer-mediated communication, participatory culture, and interactions that take place in social reality (Kozinets & Gambetti, 2020).

This virtual interaction method is an understanding of the key activity of users within virtual communities on social media (Kaoukaou, 2020). The virtual observation was conducted on three Indonesian traveler Instagram (travelgram) accounts. In 2018, those three travelgrams were nominated as the top ten Indonesian travelgrams as the most recommended by IDN TIMES media (Faustine, 2018).

In selecting three out of ten travelgrams, the researchers first observed the number of followers. The first travelgram had the highest number of followers, the second had an average number of followers, and the third had the fewest followers among them. The number of followers on Instagram served as a measure of popularity. However, by observing the three accounts through the abovementioned procedure, it can be assumed that changes to each social media account occurred through similar interaction patterns in the online environment. These patterns demonstrated how comments on postings make reference to the tourism-related activities shown in the corresponding image.

Each travelgram is managed by travelers who were travel bloggers that wrote their trips on their blogs. In the beginning, they were only famous among Indonesian people but they are generally well-known worldwide. The data collection was conducted from June 2021 until the end of August 2021. Within this three-month period, the study could interpret the meaning that occurred through interactions from reels posts. The time setting of the study was determined and adjusted based on the characteristics of netnography (Kozinets, 2010) and aligned with the study objectives. Over a period of three months, the researcher gathered sufficient data to establish consistent coding patterns. This aligns with the principles of qualitative data analysis, which suggest that data collection may conclude once a recurring pattern emerges that comprehensively address the research objective. In addition, in June 2021, first reels launched in Indonesia, making it a reference point to observe how users could produce reels, a new feature provided by Instagram.

The researcher respects the privacy rights of travelgram by preserving the account name and identity. Therefore, in this study, the terms travelgram 1, travelgram 2, and travelgram 3 were used to provide information about the comments provided for each travelgram. Meanwhile, the followers' identities were not mentioned. The researcher only referred to them as comment 1, comment 2, and so on. The three observed travelgrams were identified by the researcher based on their specific characteristics of tourism. travelgram 1 specialized in marine tourism,



travelgram 2 focused on nature tourism in two countries, Australia and Indonesia, and travelgram 3 highlighted cultural tourism.

After obtaining the constructed meanings, referring to the current study's objective, namely observing the transformation process that occurred through habitus, the narrative method was applied. Narrative method uses stories to describe human experiences and practices (Mertova & Webster, 2019). The story as a narrative is a text that can show how the initial conditions and new forms occur through a process of change. By telling stories, people give meaning to their lives. In addition, seeing experiences as a journey in life is to see how people construct the meaning of their life experiences (Russell, 2022). In the context of habitus, this study analyzed the components, elements, and performances through their individual and social relationships.

As an accurate method, a narrative design focuses on experiences and reflections that can answer research questions (Barkhuizen & Consoli, 2021). Experience is representative of an event experienced by individuals. When individuals tell stories about their experiences, internally their memory system works and interacts with the external sociocultural context. Individuals understand the function of what they are told, so that the narrative is subjective but has an objective impact. As a reflection, a narrative is not just like a report made by someone. In addition to understanding their experience, individuals also perceive themselves reciprocally throughout the development of their identity. Thus, through the story of their experiences, individuals deeply reflect on how they make meaning of life in this world. These individuals are agents who actively engage in practices that contribute to the transformation process within the social environment on social media.

The in-depth interviews were conducted with three travelers who were also the ones who managed each travelgram, and served as the primary informants in the previous Netnography method that was carried out before. Therefore, the interview excerpts showed that Traveler 1 is the admin of travelgram 1, Traveler 2 is the admin of travelgram 2, and Traveler 3 was the admin of travelgram 3.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social media allows everyone to participate openly. This can be done by users, such as Instagram followers, by liking and and commenting on posts. Various comments from followers and interactions between followers posted on travelgram feeds have become a space for interaction on social media platforms.

Comments on reels of Travelgram 1:

Wow! love face emoticon 3x (Comment 1)

It's sooooo good, bro/sis love face emoticon 3x (Comment 2)

Fire 5x (Comments 3)

It's really amazing (Comment 4)

Daebakkkkk (Comment 5)

This is really cool (Comment 6)

Comments can be in the form of words, symbols, or simple sentences referring to the content created. Admiration is an attitude shown in social interactions. The audience showed amazement at the experiences of travelers. These experiences are some that other people may not be able to have because it is difficult and requires courage. Besides, tourist sites are places that are rare or difficult to reach. In addition to admiration for tourist scenery, admiration is also shown for the attributes of the traveler. These attributes include clothes worn, which according to other people are unique according to brand. Furthermore, admiration is also shown for tools like camera used and the features provided to produce videos.

Comments on reels of Travelgram 1:

I'm curious about your swimsuit, it's cute. Love face, sunglasses face emoticons. (Comment 4)

Diving clothes with skulls, it's cool. Cry face emoticon. (Comment 5)

I want to ask, is it a mobile phone underwater casing? Where do you buy it?

And what brand is it? Tq have a healthy day (Comment 6)

The form of admiration is often given by followers in most content produced. When a person feels amazed by another person, they make the other person a model and even think that the other person is better than themselves (Meng-Lewis et al., 2021). Admiration shows the privileges (specializations) possessed by the three travelers. Here, social media is able to build a specialization, namely the variation of social status through what is produced, as a form of participation in social media in a networking society.

Travelers understand their specialization through the content they produce on their social media. In the interview, travelers stated how their followers gave them an identity through the comments given.

"So maybe what's somewhat identical is that when I go to sea, I take a lot of photos and I like taking photos in the water, I think it is attached to a lot of people. (Maybe they think) "This (person) is really sea professional" like that." (Traveler 1)

Travel 2 said, “and people know we're authentic, when we go somewhere that's authentic. So, all they saw was real.” Identity is a privilege that is interpreted by travelers as something that is given to them and makes them different from other travelers. Thus, traveling is not only about a tourist trip but how it is interpreted by other people, namely followers of travelgram accounts. Traveler 2 stated that there was a direct message addressed to them through the DM (Direct Message) feature. They felt satisfied when people determined their travel destinations because of what they posted. Thus, the travelers are motivated to produce content that can build interest for their followers to travel to the places they display on social media. The responses given by social media users show the mediatization process that occurs in social media. People directly or indirectly increase the use of media aimed at influencing or shaping society (Jarrar et al., 2020).

“As for hope, actually I think that it's not hope, but (it is more of) satisfaction. I mean, when we post something and those who see (the post) will actually come there one day. This, I think, is one of the biggest rewards (for me).” (Traveler 2)

When other people do the same thing, travelers understand that what is displayed on social media is not just about traveling and producing content. They interpret traveling as messages to them. In their interactions, social media users revealed that their traveling references are travel posts shared via reels on Instagram. Content on social media, a social space where anyone can post tourist sites or activities, becomes references for other users to travel. Furthermore, many comments stated that they really want to go to the place shared and do what travelers do.

Those who comment are people who also like traveling or participating in #travel. Even though on social media everyone is free to network with anyone, people use social media to network with people who have similar interests, whether it's hobbies, professions, or associations that can provide information according to someone's interests. Thus, traveling is not only a physical activity. Travelers interpret traveling through social interactions on social media. The process of internality that occurs within them determines the action, namely capital.

Social Media as Digital Cultural Capital

The interviews revealed that the three travelers have expertise in visualizing tourist sites on Instagram. Traveler 1 who already has a background in the world of tourism and expertise in making visualization in conventional media, cultivated this background on social media. However, other travelers admitted that they built expertise in using technology such as photos and videos so that they can strengthen visualization. The following quotes demonstrates this process:

“I used to be on TV news, for several years I was on regular news. I carried out regular coverage, such as at the Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission or the House of Representatives, I looked for events at these places. Then in 2010, I got a diving certification, the diving lesson was actually from the office. At that time there were ten people, one of whom was me, so from there I was often "borrowed" for a travel program on TV at that time. So there was a travel program that needed a presenter who could dive, so I was there, but I still did two jobs—sometimes I carried out travel coverage and sometimes I carried out hard news coverage. I did this until 2011 before I was

fully involved in that travel program. I think this base makes me focus on visuals (visualization). When taking photos, I try to get good results. In the past, the standard was at least magazine-like photos because at that moment the benchmark was the curated photos in the magazine. At that time, I wanted that the photos I posted on the blog or social media are worthy of publication.” (Traveler 1)

“We mostly share, we both take photos. At first, Adam taught me photography techniques. Actually, it's just basic photography, I learned to take regular photos. But maybe the destination is interesting, so people think that the place is good because they've never been there and the place is rarely visited. There are lots of photos that might make people say, "Wow, that's cool" but it's not because of the photo, it's the place. People who don't know the place will be like “Oh I want to go there.” As for photos, we don't use special editing, usually, it's just colors editing. No, we don't use it (editing), the photos are real—like I said, maybe what makes people really like the photos is the destination itself because it's proven that when we're not traveling, there aren't really good photos. So if we don't go anywhere, there aren't any good photos.” (Traveler 2)

“I started to develop skills for (making/creating) videos as before it was just for (taking) photos and (writing in) a blog. I really wanted the blog to be home, so there were writings that I wanted to write and share, reinforced with visuals from photos and completed with audiovisuals that I made with these travel videos.” (Traveler 3)

Visualization in each content is produced in the form of images (photos) and videos. Images and videos are packed with aesthetics and music. Aesthetics, including those made with video-making technology, are screen effects, coloring, slow motion techniques, and editing techniques that make videos look more beautiful. Beautiful in this case is in addition to having visual characteristics. The videos depict scenery at tourist sites more dramatically than they really are. Both visual effects and music techniques are features provided by social media. Social media guides people to produce content according to the qualification standards of the technology. Even so, travelers can use other applications as long as they can match the qualification standards of the social media.

“So far, I have used the Lightroom application, Lightroom Mobile is on my mobile phone. This editing application is more on changing and adjusting colors. For example, the backlight can be added, the color saturation can be reduced. For photo shoots, it is usually like that, sometimes the photo is already perfect but there is one leaf that is visible on top but it's impossible to remove it, so people say it's healed (erased) a little. (I think) it's more like that, but so far, the photos are real. The feeling when you come to the place is like that, so when you come it's perfect.” (Traveler 1)

Travelers tell stories in the caption, which is one of the social media features in storytelling, namely experiences that become their inspiration, such as stories and exciting events. Each individual produces content that is different from one another. Even though they are in one tourist site, for example, what is displayed and how they package content varies greatly depending on the interests and specialties of each travelgram.

Due to different abilities, travel specialties, and creativity, each traveler produced messages with different techniques but still adjust to the format provided. Social media users or agents actively create meaning through their abilities. Agents become part of the cultural industry with practices carried out at their levels. In contrast to cultural work practices, which are carried out by institutions in conventional media such as broadcasting, radio, film, and other techniques that allow the content to be mass-produced.

Content production is carried out continuously by traveler in journal writing, which is displayed through content posted on their social media. Social media is a tool for cultural work practices to be carried out by users (Fuchs, 2020). Furthermore, content production practices are continuously carried out by individuals to fulfill what is needed on social media. Increased content production will increasingly fill the space in social media. The content production is accompanied by information that becomes travelers' ability to convey messages to their followers. Information can be in the form of tourist sites, countries, or activities that can be carried out, including anything worn by them. For example, Traveler 3 said, "I go to remote places where people rarely visit, I visit tribes that are rarely exposed to people. This makes me happy, there are lots of values, lessons learned, for example, the way they protect nature in Papua." Another said:

"We want to experience something good - good scenery, good food, and friendly people. We want to share that experience. For example, when we went to the Kraton Cliffs in 2014, we wanted to share, it became a booming place after we posted it. Before that, people didn't know the place, how much the entrance fee is but after that it becomes a better place. People around can earn money, the government can make investment in infrastructure, and there is an entrance fee. (Traveler 2)

Information is synonymous with technology. The information conveyed by travelers then expanded interactions between Instagram users. The audience further obtained information that is continuously growing with the addition of other questions and comments expressed by Instagram users. The conversation is intertwined when it is answered by travelers or continues with comments from other users. Thus, the information obtained by each individual increases.

Opportunities to spread information are expanding and even reaching a global scale, especially on reels, which is a new feature released by Instagram in early August 2020. When individuals post content on reels, notifications appear so that their followers can see their reels immediately. Social media provides this feature to support travelers and other influencers to vary the way they can convey messages to their audience. Video reels will appear on each user's screen with a very attractive and exclusive-looking cover that invites users to view video reels. This reel feature is a privilege compared to other features of existing social media. At a glance, the reel format is not different from other social media formats, namely Lasso on Facebook and TikTok. Limited-length videos with nearly identical music, animation, and text effects are different from previous social media and other technology.

Account users who post on reels will have a higher chance of going viral. Video reels created by individuals will be combined in the "Top Reels" segment on Instagram globally. Top Reels consists of various categories according to the interests and tastes of people and traveling is one of the highest categories of interest. The ability to be

successful using travelgram is also about understanding how the technology (and social media) works. In their statement, travelers describe how trends occur, including reading algorithms. So, the information conveyed will be linked to how technology works.

We have to know how the technology works; what kind of algorithm works so that the concern we make is not in vain. Of course, the content is useful, but we can feel its usefulness when it reaches our audience, that's where the creative process of an artist is actually appreciated and they don't need money, they don't need anything, they need appreciation from the readers - the audience, that's what I think. (Traveler 2)

Okay, as content creators on travelgram, we have to be able to read the situation, what's the trend? So, if we don't update, we can't make a list of content, I'm a travel person, people know the xxx is a traveler who get lost with his backpack, like that. (Traveler 3)

The strengths in the content produced are in visual images where individuals record what they see in one place and in the ability of travelers to write and provide information. It's similar to a journal, which is a record of daily events that are experienced. Thus, travelers have cultural capital attached to technology. Information is logical technology, and by utilizing technology and features provided by social media, the visualization produced represents the affordances of the technology (and social media).

Instagram as a space for digital social interactions

Instagram becomes a space for sharing knowledge among individuals. For travelers, they share information with their followers about tourism, places, weather, community environment, and so on. This process takes place through comments, which become a space for interactions between traveler and other social media users to gain knowledge from each other. Virtual life in social media has become one field for individuals because through information and interactions obtained from similar interests, individuals will increase their knowledge (Bourdieu, 1994).

However, these travelers also get knowledge from other social media users, namely about how to take photos from a certain point of view with professional results. According to Traveler 1, she created content that referred to her references.

"Her name is Chiara Ferragni, she's one of the biggest fashion bloggers in the world. She started much earlier than me. Her photos are curated, maybe in the past it was like those fashion kids who took photos in front of a house and the photos seemed like there really was a photographer and she did exactly that. And she was also bilingual because she is Italian, so she wrote in both English and Italian. I was able to do it in Indonesian and English but because 90% of my blog viewers were Indonesian, so I thought it wasn't necessary, there was Google Translate too. So, the reference in the past maybe was more like that, (I took a reference) from the fashion bloggers because there were more fashion bloggers (than travel bloggers) at that time. So, I wanted visual references, I want to display something good, I want to display something like this (fashion blogger), but the content is travel." (Traveler 1)

This travelgram's followers give messages regarding what they admire that these travelers do and where they go based on what is shared on their Instagram. The feeling of admiration that arises because of how individuals could build meaning through their social media can lead to the same action (done by their followers) (Sururin et al., 2022). In other interactions, Traveler 1 also stated that they gain knowledge that what they share on Instagram can help build their identity. So, when they produce content, it is prepared according to the expectations of their followers. Not only that, but the next travel destination will also be determined from the wishes of their followers which are conveyed via DM or comments.

Comments on Reels Travelgram 1:

Please, make more sea editions. (Comment 1)

It's a sign that you need to add new stock for reels, Pru (cry face emoticon)(Comment 2)

Various comments in the form of requests appear in the reel post columns. Comments addressed to the account illustrate the motivation to create other content. Thus, this behavior becomes a trigger for individuals to produce content, which often means that they have to travel. When requests are submitted continuously, digital practice pressure cannot be avoided. Therefore, other new posts appear containing tourist activities.

Here, agents continuously produce symbols through the features provided. Even though agents are subjects who construct individual symbols through improvisation in the practice of making meaning through everyday experiences, agents will be structured, namely, to follow and submit to social media. When individuals are on social media, which are always surrounded by producers and consumers of symbols, it will become an experience that is the basis for changing their practices. In addition, individuals will experience greater symbol production pressure in interactions on social media, and therefore individuals will further their cultural practices.

Travelgram is the practice of sharing visuals of travel, which are then posted on social media. However, as a creator of social processes, the externalization that occurs refers to internalization, meaning individual experiences are based on conversational references, specifically what is interpreted through travelgram posts. Thus, the change process on social media involves a structured interaction of externalization and internalization.

The experiences of travelgram and followers on social media shape people's travel needs. Travelgram's next destination is influenced by interactions with the content creator and followers, while followers' travel needs are built upon their experiences and references from travelgram. The externalization and internalization processes between travelgram and its followers are mutually dependent (Carvalho et al., 2023). These dependency interactions manifest in various ways, leading to the emergence of different types of travelgrams, such as diver travelgrams, inter-country travelgrams, and culinary travelgrams. Each type has its own specialty, creating clear distinctions among them. Social media, as the platform for these interactions, has become a field that generates needs, ultimately determining different travel practices.

The process resulting from digital interactions on social media continues to create needs for symbols (Soldat et al., 2024). These needs help identify differences between one class and another. Not only does social media posts show class differences, but they also foster increasingly heterogeneous interests within society, largely due to the

influence of social media. Agents are thus creators of social processes and recipients or targets of the consequences that emerge from these interactions. The experiences gained from the externalization and internalization processes in social media, provide an opportunity to harmonize the conflicting principles of individuality and generality. The digital habitus thus becomes a model for changes in consumption occurring in advanced modern societies. This process of change involves the internalization and externalization of experiences in the real world through the unreal medium of social media, driven by digital cultural capital.

The results prove that social media has evolved into a prominent sphere for digital habitus. Within Bourdieu's framework, habitus serves as the foundation for an individual's social practices; however, this study demonstrates that in the digital field of social media, habitus is no longer confined to physical spaces. Social media functions as a digital arena where *travelgrams* and their followers engage in an intensive exchange of symbolic capital. This process becomes evident when interactions shift from the physical destination itself to peripheral yet significant aspects, such as clothing themes, visual aesthetics, and consumption patterns at the travel site.

The dialectic of externalization and internalization within these digital interactions facilitates a collective construction of meaning, where "taste" is co-created. Meaningful tastes are absorbed and institutionalized as new aesthetic standards. This reinforces the notion that social media is not merely a medium for message transmission, but a space where social actions undergo fundamental transformations. The meaningful conversations occurring in comment sections or direct messages represent a form of digital social interaction capable of shifting an individual's disposition regarding what constitutes "authentic travel".

To understand the potency of these conversations in binding an audience, Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) provides a complementary lens. Symbolic convergence occurs when *travelgrams* and their followers share a "fantasy theme" regarding travel lifestyles. Through expanding topics such as sartorial choices and location appraisals, a fantasy chaining process emerges, fostering a shared group consciousness (Rewindinar, et al, 2020). Consequently, digital habitus transcends the individual, becoming a collective identity anchored in the shared interests of the influencer and their community. At this stage, taste is no longer viewed as a free personal choice, but as a byproduct of the convergence of meaning within that digital field.

Nevertheless, applying Bourdieu's perspective to the digital realm invites critical scrutiny. Bourdieu's theory is often critiqued for being overly deterministic, suggesting individuals are somewhat trapped within rigid class structures and habitus (Cotnam, et al, 2024). In the context of social media, these structures become fluid. Moreover, digital habitus can be formed and altered rapidly, dictated by the pace of algorithms. This indicates that individual agency in social media possesses greater flexibility to adapt to evolving trends—a dynamic that is not fully accommodated in classic Bourdieusian thought.

CONCLUSION

Digital habitus is a model of social change occurring in advanced modern societies. It represents the interaction model of agents who are active both in the real world and on social media, relying on the capability requirements known as digital cultural capital. This study of changes in consumption practices as shown by people's tastes in traveling indicate the role of social media. Social media as a space for social interactions among connected and networked individuals provides confirmation of technology as a field in transformation through habitus. Even though the audience is heterogeneous, social media can provide connectivity for homogeneous networks that follow individuals' interests.

The practices that people do through social media in constructing meaning through visuals, audio, and features provided on social media have become cultural capital. Social media provides and guides people in constructing that meaning. In the process of building meaning, mediatization is also present. People use the media to encourage others to take the same action. The environment in social media has determined the consumption of people in travelling. Thus, traveling today represents symbolic consumption that shows differences in a person's class status. The transformation process that takes place through digital habitus, namely in social media, has become a feature of modern society.

This study enhanced the understanding of tourism needs in advanced modern societies that can be built through digital habitus. Because this study focused on the interactions via social media, which is central to the change process, more research is needed regarding the visual aspects of digital cultural products. Therefore, the researcher recommends conducting visual analyses of travelgram posts, specifically photographs, to emphasize the practical power of visuals as digital cultural capital. This approach would allow for a broader examination of the dynamics of the social change model from the perspective of digital habitus.

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