CONSPICUOUS COMPASSION, SOCIAL MEDIA AND IDENTITY: A CASE STUDY OF @DR.TIRTA INSTAGRAM DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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STATEMENT BY THE AUTHOR

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis.

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ABSTRACT

CONSPICUOUS COMPASSION, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND IDENTITY: HOW YOUNG INFLUENCERS SHOW CONSPICUOUS COMPASSION ON INSTAGRAM

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Social media allows individuals to construct their own identities. This affects the communication and the way people represent themselves online. One of the new ways of self-presentation with regard to an individual's identity is conspicuous compassion, which can be described as the flaunting of good behavior to others. Drawing on the antecedents of conspicuous compassion, which is Need for Uniqueness (NFU) and Attention to Social Comparison Information (ATSCI), this research investigates how conspicuous compassion is portrayed by an Indonesian Instagram influencer, Dr. Tirta Mandira Hudhi, in his Instagram posts and how this portrayal influences his image online. This study employs a qualitative research by applying textual analysis through the prism of semiotics to interpret the deeper meaning behind the images and captions published from his account @dr.tirta between the dates of 23-30th of March 2020. Firstly, the results show that @dr.tirta portrays conspicuous compassion through his social interactions, involvement in fighting the coronavirus, unique style and

appearance, and his knowledge in the medical field. He achieves this through displaying his style visibly in his photos or his opinions throughout the posts. Secondly, results indicate that @dr.tirta is highly susceptible to his followers and their perspective of him, making him conformed to adjust his image to meet their expectations.

Keywords: Conspicuous Compassion, Social Media, Identity, Influencer, Instagram

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the seeds of prayers my father planted
from the day I was born, to value the importance of academic achievements.

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