Contested Masculinity and Social Media

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The increasing Muslim consciousness in the Southeast Asian region, has led to rising tensions amongst religious, ethnic and national dimensions of belonging. Below the surface of these growing Muslim hegemonic aspirations, masculinity is becoming increasingly important as a contested marker of social positioning: used to legitimise institutionalised patriarchy and power relations between and within genders as well as acting as a tool for boundary-making and the maintenance of socio-political hegemony, particularly in secular and multiethnic settings. This project hypothesises that Islamic masculinity and claims to patriarchy have become contested due to challenges and changes on various social fronts. The tense relationship between ethnic, religious and national affiliation have resulted in challenges to men's ability in constructing belonging with the need to reassess normative and performative aspects of the 'ideal' Muslim man. This will be examined taking the social media canvas as an empirical stage where men present, negotiate and mould their belonging and understanding of Islamic masculinity in the three selected contexts of Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore.

Keywords: Masculinity, Islam, social media, identity, intersectionality, belonging

Consumption of Islamic Masculinity

The proposed project focuses on Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia where Islamic communities are the majority or form a significant minority in multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies. These countries are paradigmatic examples for the growing tensions amongst religious, ethnic and national dimensions of belonging in Southeast Asia. These tensions unfold between the following lines of conflict: i) between the influence of local interpretations of Islam and universal interpretations as carried by the notion of the Ummah; ii) the tensions between conflicting ethnic and religious beliefs, between Muslim and non-Muslim communities in these countries; iii) between the notion of belonging to the Pan-national Ummah and the belonging arising from citizenship; and iv) the tensions between hegemonic masculinity and the vocal rise and influence of alternative masculinities. The proposed project hypothesises that Islamic masculinity and claims to patriarchy have become precarious due to these challenges and social changes. Arising from this assumed contested position, the central question thus becomes - how do men respond with reconstructing social belonging in order to navigate these overlapping tensions?

Of interest is how and to what extent men turn towards strengthening the Islamic aspect of their masculinity and how far this becomes conflictual with their ethnic and national belonging. With the further

objective of understanding the tensions between maintaining a form of masculinity that is both recognisable and accepted by others while at the same time being meaningful to oneself, this may possibly lead to a variety of multiple masculinities that unfold. This will be examined by means of social media presentations and communications of Muslim men taking a selected social media platform in each of the three countries. In Southeast Asia social media has become an important tool for expressions of self and identity as well as a space to learn, communicate and relate to others. As such, social media has become an integral part of the lifeworld experience in Southeast Asia (George 2015, Schafer 2015, Tapsell 2015). This has contributed to widening interpretations of Islam and masculinity, for instance, in the 'liberal' and 'conservative' debates surrounding the responsibilities of men over women, rights of Muslim men and debates over performative aspects of Islam. These debates are contested and asserted by different actors, from individuals or 'layman' to 'experts' claiming ulama or scholarly credentials to state sponsored Islamic institutions. The aim is to show how men are sharing, constructing and moulding their imaginations of Islamic masculinity. Such imaginations are unpacked through the canvas of social media beyond the destructive images of Islamic masculinity as often depicted in mainstream media through the lens of a shifting lived reality of multiple Islamic masculinities.

Although research in the field of social media is growing, little attention has been directed at the influence of social media in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. Through social media, men are sharing, constructing and moulding their imaginations of Islamic masculinity. This in turn, affects relationships with women, other interpretations of masculinity, social institutions as well as discourses on patriarchy, power relations and gender equality. Therefore, with the increasing media focus on a destructive form of Islamic masculinity, it becomes crucial to understand the basis of this masculinity and its continuing contested position before it is actionable through violence, aggression and terrorism, but also to consider the possibility of multiple expressions of Islamic masculinity.

Hypothesis

This project hypothesises that the notion of Islamic masculinity and claims to patriarchy have become contested due to challenges and changes on various fronts: shifting gender relations, the negative impressions of Islam and Muslim men e.g. as depicted in the media largely attributed to a dangerous masculinity often associated with terrorism, surveillance by the state, and the 'call of the Ummah' which conflicts with national and ethnic belonging. Therefore, the tense relation between ethnic, religious and national affiliation have resulted in challenges to men's ability in constructing belonging. Islamic masculinity then becomes contested as males are forced into negotiating different, overlapping and contesting social dimensions of belonging with the need to reassess normative and performative aspects of the 'ideal' Muslim man.

Therefore, the need to search for belonging, to communicate and reaffirm one's Islamic masculinity is even more pressing than before. On social media there exists a medium that allows for apprehending and producing the realised world from sources that would either change or strengthen belonging through meaningful symbols and significant others. This element of social media that allows for the externalisation, objectivation and internalisation of symbols and narratives is represented in the social media canvas metaphor. The social and communicative aspect of social media fulfils the need for reality maintenance and the achievement of a mutually agreed upon view of reality through language and symbols.

Islamic Masculinity: A cross-field study

This research will utilise the fields of sociology of religion, masculinity studies and social media studies as bases to theoretically reference and structure the research direction. Due to the overlapping social categories, these fields will be analysed through the intersectionality approach theorised by Kimberle Crenshaw and further developed by Patricia-Hill Collins. 'Rather than examining gender, race and

class, and nation as distinctive social hierarchies, intersectionality examines how they mutually construct one another' (Collins 1998:1). The relational model of this approach considers the transformations that occur when different categories meet and considers the composite background behind any one social category as well as its interactions with other categories. Therefore, in the case of Islamic masculinity, both Islam and masculinity are internally produced from the interaction between gender, ethnicity and national belonging in the context of a postcolonial multi-ethnic context. The resultant categories of Islam and masculinity then interact in a manner that are not simply additives to the individual but produces its own separate effect.

Interdisciplinary studies of Islam in Southeast Asia

There has been increasing focus on research about Islam in Southeast Asia, especially since the negative media depictions of Islam around the world. However, as Islam in present day Southeast Asia is embedded within and between relationships in politics, culture and ethnicity, studies on the region have been increasingly interdisciplinary. Further, the populous region where Islam is a dominant religion, presents an area which is believed to be open to influences from the Middle East, galvanising sympathisers to respond to events in the Middle East. Therefore research on Islam in present-day Southeast Asia is shifting between anthropological and ethnographic studies on the performative and normative aspects of the adoption of Islam (Barnard et al. 2004) towards more focus on relationships between religion and national politics, research on cultural and ethnic interpretations of Islam and effects of inter-religious and inter-ethnic interaction as a product of post-colonialism (Alatas 1963, Benjamin 1976, Syamsul 2005).

Earlier research focused on the Islamic practices across ethnic groups through observing localised practices which were often infused with pre-Islamic traditions and beliefs (Houben 2003) as well as the division of religions along ethnic lines (Alatas 1963). Therefore, Islam incorporated culture and other be-

liefs that were at times, incongruent with the teachings from the Middle East further strengthening the subjectivity of local practices (Berg; 2011). This also highlighted the urban and rural divide as the urban areas were open to influences from outside the region with its growth in trade and commerce from colonialism (Alatas 1963). The divide between Muslims from the countryside and the city becomes apparent with migration to Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. These differences of religious practices and beliefs gave rise to the 'revivalist' movement in the 1970s which sought to unite and align the fragmented practices with traditions from the Middle East. Islam remained an important marker of identity and belonging in the Malay or native ethnicities in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore, making socialisation a key pillar for membership into this majority group which ascribed social, economic or political advantages (Vickers 2004). The political economy perspective further focused on Islam's adoption by nation-state governments in the 1950s. The state and Islam were regarded as a boundary making tool to unite multi-ethnic groups under the same banner (Benjamin 2005; Liow 2011; Maaruf 2005).

Across much of this research, it had been assumed that Southeast Asia is at the periphery of the Islamic world (Houben 2003; Kersten 2007), therefore making its followers susceptible to influence from the Middle East. However, this ignores the locally driven perspectives that seek to incorporate Islam with pre-existing traditions and beliefs as well as the multi-ethnic contexts embedded in every nation-state. 'Revivalist' movements in the 1970s in Indonesia and Malaysia centered on 'returning' to the pure brand of Islam as espoused via the traditions of the Middle East and eradicating local adaptations of Islam which featured non-Islamic practices (Elson 2010; McCoy 2013).

Historical research has shown that the colonial experience had a profound effect on the social and political structures of these communities especially after independence to the nation-states as they are known today (Reed 2004; Vickers 2004). This experience strengthened a pre-colonial consciousness of belonging between the native populations in the region, first

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under the common ethnicity generalised as Malay, then to Islam. However, these nation-states had to manage a fragmented social and political landscape rife with sectarianism. Clashes between Muslims and Christians as well as Malays and non-Malays were commonplace in the 1960s. For these states to progress different strategies for boundary making were adopted (Benjamin 1976), some of which still exist today. These boundaries between ethnicities became pliable in relation to the social field, with =some becoming more expansive while others were more constrained. The definition of 'Malay' for instance was expanded in Malaysia to include the Dayak (indigenous) communities on Borneo Island, this boosted the Malay population, giving them political control over the country. Furthermore, by institutionally making Islam a part of the Malay identity this made it the official religion (Barnard 2004; Mohamed 2012; Rosila 2010; Reid 2014; Vedi & Teck 2011). A clear boundary was maintained between Malays and non-Malays and by extension Muslims and non-Muslims. On the other hand, in Singapore the British reduced the resident population of Muslims to a minority through migration from China and India. Islam was relegated to the periphery as the island became more multi-ethnic and multi-religious (Mohamed 2012, 2014). However, as the island had been a transit point and the native population were of Malay ethnicity, there remains an affinity with Malaysia and Indonesia, making the discourses and changes in these larger countries affect the community in Singapore (Noraini & Leong 2013). In Indonesia, the State adopted Pancasila or core principles which protected the freedom of religion and equality amongst ethnicities in 1945. This relieved the pressure on minority ethnicities to expand their boundaries. However, as Islam transcended many communities it became a rallying point to unite the communities across the islands. These efforts at boundary making especially with Islam as a basis, provided a sense of belonging between Islamic communities in Southeast Asia with the larger pan-Islamic community (Liow 2009). These intricate networks of institutional claims to belonging further complicates the maintenance of a coherent identity in the presence of an expanding objective universe with the subjective reality becoming more diversified.

Most recently, sociological research in the region focused on the increased relevance of religiosity as a marker of belonging as well as increased consciousness of the Ummah in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. The trials and tribulations of Muslims in the Middle East were felt by Muslims in Southeast Asia. This identification and sense of belonging led to explicit grassroots efforts from an increasing 'us' versus 'them' mentality disseminated through preachers and politicians to male-dominated terrorist cells which intended to fight for Islam (Ali 2011; Kamaludeen et al. 2010; Low 2009). This not only differentiated Muslims from Westerners but also between Muslims and non-Muslims in these multi-ethnic societies, adding to tensions in everyday encounters from respecting dietary restrictions to the exclusivity over the use of Allah or God by Muslims (Brown 2014; Kamaludeen et al. 2010; Low 2009). Such opinions gaining popularity has led to increased scrutiny by local enforcement agencies and closer monitoring of religiosity to detect the phenomenon dubbed 'self-radicalisation', where individuals become followers of extreme ideology after being exposed to content on digital and social media (George 2015; Mazer 2012; Sim 2016). Implicitly, individuals and organisations adopted more visible identifiers of their Muslim identity; from new mosque designs that adopted Ottoman styling to the increase pressure on women to don the headscarf and the religious economy that grew as a result of this visibility. Mosques were scrutinised as the heightened state of security remained in place (Liao 2009; Sakai et al. 2013).

Islamic Masculinity in South East Asia

Studies on Islamic masculinity in Southeast Asia have had an emphasis on the performative aspects of masculinity. Several studies have sought to understand the depictions of Muslim males in movies and in popular novels (Barking 2014; Clark 2004; Hosterey et al. 2012). These studies revealed the attractiveness of men with high levels of piety amongst women and by their immediate community. Piety was used as a barometer of the individual's behaviour and intentions when

dealing with women in romantic settings. Moreover, men who showed a 'high' level of piety were often elevated to positions of authority in their communities. According to Cornell, masculinity is a relational concept that holds meaning in relation to femininity and holds a social and cultural demarcation. Therefore, these studies served to highlight the relational expectations for men by women, the community around them as well as from men themselves (Boellstoff 2004; Carver 1996). These studies also noted the growing popularity of novels and movies with this content amongst the wider audience in Indonesia and Malaysia. Hence, through these studies it is apparent that there are notions of masculinity in the Muslim consciousness which references traits by the Prophet Muhammad and his closest companions (Amanullah 2003; Hosterey et al. 2012; McKinnon 2003; Mohd 2012). Although this form of masculinity often does not consider the current realities of living, it remains a highly popular prescription that has transcended different places and regions through the Ummah. Amanullah (2003) observed that these traditions play a role in shaping and policing masculinity affecting not just social interactions but also the understanding of Islam. On the other hand, several studies on masculinity in Indonesia also found that youth in Jakarta feel pressured to take on habits like smoking and drinking as a display of masculinity (Nawi & Whitehall 2007; Nilan 2008; Nilan et al. 2011; Viebeke 2004). These displays are symbolically crucial in the process of 'becoming a man'. More in-depth studies have also been conducted in relation to the role of masculinity in domestic violence. Researchers found that constructions of Islamic masculinity played a crucial role in men's attitude towards violence (Hayati et al; 2014, Blackwood; 2007). This study pointed out that while religion was a strong underlying factor in views towards patriarchy and the domination of women, economic and social standing were also important factors in understanding men's beliefs regarding appropriate male and female behaviour, men's appraisal of stress, challenge and threats towards masculine norms as well as attitudes towards power imbalances in relationships.

Hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy are crucial concepts that has been identified across most of these studies. It has been identified in situations where there is male dominance and the appearance of consent or where there are developmental steps being taken to assume dominance. However, the essence or nature of hegemony in these relationships is rarely traced. As Hearn (2004) noted, power is a very significant aspect of men's social relations. But while hegemonic masculinity exists, only its effects on the dominated are similar. The process of eliciting consent and the basis of power differs according to the context of the social field in which the relationship is based on. Therefore, the concept of hegemonic masculinity itself needs to be analysed within the framework of reality construction, in relation to the tensions that exists for the Muslim man, especially in the growing specter of Muslim consciousness in Southeast Asia, where the attraction of the Ummah grows stronger as identification with the struggles of Muslims in conflict areas intensifies through media coverage and sermons (Kersten 2007). This is crucial due to the negative stereotypes of Muslim men as being violent and oppressive. Although '[h]egemonic masculinity has been proposed as a form of masculinity or a configuration of gender practice which is in contrast to less dominant or subordinated forms of masculinity- complicit, subordinated, marginalised' (Hearn 2004:7), Connell's masculinities typology is an important foundation to understand the differences between masculinities that are not seeking to dominate as well as the domination of hegemonic masculinity on the other forms. However, with ethnic, national and pan-Islamic tensions as well as piety being a source of interest, the actor with the ascribed masculine identity is under constant pressure to balance 'ideal' masculinity and with his own interpretations as a result of interactions in the lifeworld.

Media and Social Media

Research on digital media and subsequently social media has been explored through the fields of communication studies, sociology and psychology. The study of digital media and Islam focused on the distribution of content through websites as well as the consumption of content through chatrooms and

forums (Anderson et al. 1999; Bunt 2003). This strain of research highlighted that conversations regarding religion were moving online as actors were seeking information and groups to share and discuss ideas on both the performative and theoretical aspects of Islam. The participants observed were both discussing their thoughts within the group, with constant references to interpretations of sacred texts, but also from electronically distributed fatwas and uploaded video sermons (Bunt 2003). Gender based observations were also conducted to understand the medium in relation to women (Piela 2015). These observations found that women were not able to progress further beyond lamenting on the challenges they face in real life. These frustrations were also silenced when the presence or opinion of a man was considered.

However, the proliferation of social media through multiple channels has extended the consumption of religion. One of the research streams focuses on the psychological impact of the media through possible actions from the actor. The freedom afforded by social media has allowed for users to post, re-post and comment on various content, including snapshots and clips of television programs. These social media actions utilise and extend the combination of language and symbols to attain a shared understanding of reality from users. Karapanos et al. (2016) found that Facebook encouraged lifeblogging, where one's life is documented chronologically on the site with strong emotional connections. This voluntary sharing of information and self-display has also led to higher social surveillance transferring it from the private to the public sphere while at the same time creating an avenue for interactions with like-minded people (Lovey 2016). Both lifeblogging and social surveillance have worked in tandem to reveal a user's identity from agreed upon identity symbols while at the same time policing these acts in cases where they contravene the claimed identity.

Furthermore, a study by Bojmel et al. (2016) found that "likes" and positive comments increased levels of self enhancement and the practice of self-derogation was met with positive responses in the immediate network. This positive emotion is also

prevalent for individuals who browse through Facebook consuming information from the immediate or wider network (Lin & Utz 2015). This leads to the assertion that Facebook has developed into a social phenomenon which brings people together, creates a sense of community and belonging, while at the same time polices these communities. Facebook also serves as a knowledge repository for sharing of content and the policing of actions. In the case of Islamic masculinity, this has presented a means in which to find resources in order to mediate the tensions and threats to masculinity as well as to widen the possibility for belonging.

Research on Social Media and Islam specifically has been built on the events of the Arab Spring in 2012. The events in Egypt and Tunisia, where a people's uprising toppled the leaders of these countries was attributed to social media as the vital tool in communicating and transferring information to the masses (Howard et al. 2011; Lim 2012; Tufekci & Wilson 2012). This placed social media as a tool for mobilisation and highlighted its influence. Since then, social media research has moved towards the influence of social media on actor's impressions of Islam. However, much of this research has focused on the Middle East as a research site.

At present, research on Southeast Asia has focused on relations between and within cultures and religions. Research emphasising the relationship between masculinity and these institutions remains limited to normative and performative explorations (Asmussen 2004; Blackwood 2007; Clark 2004; Heiduk 2012; Hostery et al. 2012; Mohd 2012; Nawi et al. 2007; Pam 2009). Questions regarding the search, establishment and reinforcement of belonging as well as the creation of meaning and sharing of social knowledge is still lacking. Besides, research on Islamic communities have tended to overlook Southeast Asia as an area of interest (Amar 2011; Aslam 2014; Sakai et al. 2013). Separately the focus of gender studies has been on the experiences and tensions of women in the respective ethnicities and religions. Focus on critical men's studies as well as religious masculine studies as a subset of that is under researched (Amanullah 2013; Aslam 2014; Korndorfer 2010).

A proposed theoretical framework

The intersectionality perspective provides the groundwork in identifying the unique position of the research subjects within the field. Further analysis of this group will continue through the relationship between Cornell's (1987) masculinities, Kaufmann's (1994) observation of men's contradictory experiences, and Berger and Luckmann's (1966) social construction of reality. Together these concepts help to contextualise and understand how Islamic masculinity is contested, reproduced and negotiated in the context of South East Asia.

Sociology of knowledge, on the other hand, presents a holistic approach to understanding social action, the context in which it is generated and the social reality it creates. This is especially so as knowledge based on symbolic meaning is the primary mode of interaction in a space devoid of physical interaction (Dicks 2012). It is a fundamental basis to share and exchange meaning between actors. The Social Construction of Reality traces the production of social reality by actors through meaning making of everyday experiences. This gives rise to 'the objectivations of subjective processes (and meanings) by which the intersubjective common-sense world is constructed' (Berger & Luckmann 1966:34) with other actors hence reinforcing a sense of belonging, 'regardless of whether the object of consciousness is experienced as belonging to an external physical world or apprehended as an element of an inwards subjective reality' (Berger & Luckmann 1966:34). To the extent that these experiences are upgraded into shared beliefs enshrined with the establishment, re-interpretation or subscription of a social institution expressed as common sense. This produces a habitualisation of the social world in which world views and social meaning are taken for granted and becomes a point of reference for future action, like for example Islamic masculinity. This common sense knowledge is especially relevant as it 'constitutes the fabric of meanings without which no society could exist (Berger & Luckmann 1966: 27). More importantly, 'their structure determines among other things the social distribution of knowledge and its relativity and relevance to the concrete

social environment of a concrete group in a concrete historical situation (Berger & Luckmann 1966: 28). Hence, a sense of belonging towards a group is dependent on the relevance and context of the group in relation to the individual, making the process in which this knowledge is constructed in the increasingly important digital sphere an important focal point.

In Berger and Luckmann's context this is theorised as the constantly occurring process of internalisation, objectification and externalisation. Internalisation and objectification are processes that are crucial in the process of subjective meaning making, internal to the individual as the actor contextualises the information with respect to his pre-existing beliefs and perspectives of the world. This is then followed by the objectification of this knowledge, translated into social symbols, external to himself and exists independently in the social world but is yet relevant to him and thus becomes part of his knowledge of the situation and its limits, or his social stock of knowledge. Social media provides an avenue to observe the final step of this process, externalisation, where actors behave in a manner reflective and at times actively (re)producing this constructed knowledge and by extension reality. This externalisation can be observed through the consumption, production and reaction to content especially on incidences that reveal tensions or contestations at the intersection of nationality, ethnicity, masculinity and religion. Social media provides a platform for the internalisation of reality providing a temporal snapshot of everyday life in contextualised settings. The profile page or 'wall' of the user highlights the temporal stream of consciousness, 'making it possible to differentiate between different levels of this temporality as it is intersubjectively available' (Berger and Luckmann 1966:40). Every interaction that occurs on this platform, from the passive subscription to groups to the more active posting of new content or responding to existing ones, the ability to disseminate information across a network adds to the stock of knowledge that is available to male Muslims as reference points for understanding the world around them as an individual subjected to this unique intersectionality.

Therefore, this participation adds to a sense of belonging which in turn contributes to the sense of existence through continuous interaction and communication. This makes social media platforms more than a medium for expression and interaction but as a gateway to the objective universe in which they are part of but exists independent of them.

Thus, the stock of knowledge and objective universe of the individual is (re)constructed in relation to the significant masculine, religious, ethnic and/or national group in which the actor feels related to and belonged. This socially moulded expression of belonging becomes part of the actor's sense of self and social reference for effective participation in the social lifeworld. Consequently, notions of Islamic masculinity can be examined as a consistent production and reproduction under this context of multiple, conflicting belonging as a result of the composite nature in which the objective universe is derived. The sociology of knowledge approach allows the reconstruction of how symbolically based meaning becomes precarious if the taken for granted reality is challenged as a result of changing realities like the growing relevance of religious identity for Muslim men in Southeast Asia and its conflicting overlaps with ethnicity and nationality as potentially oppositional identity features. This will be instructive in analyzing reconstruction of how Muslim men deal with ongoing problems with coherence and consistency of belonging, contested social positions and how they seek to maintain a balance between the conflicting identity dimensions.

The digital space becomes a crucial point of reference in relation to the diversified masculinities that Cornell identified and hegemonic Islamic masculinity, where social media has provided an avenue for these differing masculinities to form communities and various forms of expression. The precariousness of understanding and interpretations of Islam, ethnicity and culture are exposed through the content produced and reproduced on social media of these actors as their stock of knowledge is challenged and the objective universes between these categories collide. The contradictory experience of power between social position and lived reality as observed by Kaufmann, challenges the 'true' Muslim man and presents an impetus for the need to reconcile this through forging a sense of belonging, especially when 'common sense' elements of power relations and patriarchy are contested. This becomes a point of focus when boundaries are maintained and reinforced through belonging especially in power relations between hegemonic and alternative masculinities as well as between men and women. Consequently, the accessibility of this medium also highlights the fractured Islamic masculinities that exist in the social world. This further exposes the conflicts in establishing hegemonic masculinity with respect to identifying the varying interpretations of the concept and exposing the precariousness of its reproductions as it is contextualised within the overlapping social categories. At the same time, men are policed by other men, women and social institutions to reproduce notions of a 'true' Muslim man. This highlights the influence of social media in providing a platform for the policing and boundary maintenance between the 'true' Islamic man, women and subordinate masculinities; both at the level of institutional expectations and lived experience.

The social media canvas where men present, negotiate and mould their belonging and understanding of Islamic masculinity, is the means in which the proposed study will reconstruct the social construction of communication and belonging. Social structure is conceived as the sum of face-to-face and abstract communications with anonymous sources, forming gyrifications and recurrent patterns of interactions, hence social media presents an opportunity for sustained and continuous interactions with these structures. As an element of reflexivity and subsequent rational action exists on social media, where account owners of social media platforms have the ability to assess and consequently take action on a post or comment on one's feed, Jürgen Habermas' (1984) approach to communicative action will be instructive in understanding the rational motivation in building a consensus with other actors of the digital community (Kihlstrom & Israel 2002; Neimi 2005). Therefore, the social aspect to managing and maintaining one's reality is a crucial tool for actors to function in the lifeworld (McCarthy 1984). As a dialectic

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to the approaches within the sociology of knowledge, Habermas' approach expands the tacit and experienced based premise of Berger and Luckmann's perspective.

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