



Semiotics of Organizational Culture: Islamic Perspectives on Telkom Indonesia's Instagram Reels Strategy

Fuad Adi Putra^{1*}, Dina Hadi Lana², Yunita Sari³ 

¹²³ Universitas Prof. Dr. Moestopo (Beragama), Jakarta, Indonesia

Email: dauppakuncup@gmail.com¹, dinnaeldha@gmail.com²

*Corresponding Author: Fuad Adi Putra dauppakuncup@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The normalization of organizational ethics through short-form digital content has become a strategic issue in contemporary institutional communication, particularly as social media increasingly functions as a space for moral regulation and value transmission. This study examines the representation of organizational culture values in Instagram Reels content published by the @livingintelkom account, focusing on the “Do’s & Don’ts Telkomers Edition.” The research aims to analyze how visual and verbal signs construct meanings related to ethics, discipline, responsibility, and professionalism, and how these meanings operate within the framework of Islamic communication and digital da’wah. Using a qualitative descriptive-interpretative approach, this study employs Roland Barthes’ semiotic analysis to explore denotative, connotative, and ideological meanings embedded in the content. The findings indicate that Instagram Reels function not merely as informational or promotional media, but as symbolic instruments for internalizing organizational culture and shaping ethical work behavior. The values represented, such as integrity, discipline, accountability, and professionalism, are closely aligned with the principles of Islamic communication, particularly *da’wah bil hāl*, where moral messages are conveyed through exemplary practice rather than verbal instruction. Theoretically, this study contributes by integrating semiotics, organizational culture, and Islamic communication studies. Practically, it offers insights for organizations in designing value-based digital communication strategies that reinforce ethical behavior in the digital era.

Keywords: Digital Media, Islamic Communication, Organizational Culture, Semiotics, Social Media

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and social media has fundamentally transformed organizational communication practices in the public sphere. Social media is no longer positioned merely as a channel for information dissemination, but has evolved into a strategic arena for constructing institutional image, transmitting values, and shaping social meaning through visual and narrative representations. (Sundar, 2020; Kietzmann et al., 2018). Instagram, as a visually driven platform, possesses strong symbolic power in

conveying persuasive messages through images, short videos, reels, and curated visual narratives. (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021).

Consequently, organizational communication on Instagram is not value-neutral; it actively produces meanings related to ethics, professionalism, discipline, and identity in the digital public space. In the context of Indonesian society, which is deeply influenced by religious and moral values, organizational communication cannot be separated from ethical responsibility and value orientation. From the perspective of Islamic communication, communication practices, regardless of whether they originate from explicitly Islamic institutions, are assessed based on their ethical substance, honesty (*ṣiddīq*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), professionalism (*itqān*), and orientation toward public benefit (*maṣlahah*). Islam views work ethics and moral values as universal principles that can manifest in any organizational context, including state-owned enterprises. Therefore, analyzing the communication practices of Telkom Indonesia, a non-religious institution, remains highly relevant for Islamic communication studies, as it allows an examination of how universal ethical values aligned with Islamic principles are symbolically articulated and normalized in contemporary digital media. In this sense, Islamic communication does not merely study “Islamic actors,” but critically examines ethical communication practices wherever they occur.

Despite the growing body of research on organizational communication and social media, critical studies that examine how organizational cultural values are visually and verbally represented and how these representations function ideologically remain limited. Most existing studies focus on measurable outcomes such as brand image, corporate reputation, audience engagement, and organizational commitment. (Singh et al., 2020; Lim et al., 2022). While these studies provide important insights into communication effectiveness, they tend to overlook the symbolic and ideological dimensions of visual content, particularly how ethical values and work culture are subtly constructed through signs, images, and narratives in digital media.

From the perspective of Islamic communication research, previous studies have largely concentrated on Islamic work ethics, religious messaging, or da'wah content produced by explicitly Islamic organizations, preachers, or influencers on social media. These studies often emphasize normative teachings, textual religious messages, or explicit moral instruction delivered through digital platforms. However, relatively few studies have examined how ethical values compatible with Islamic principles are communicated implicitly through visual-symbolic practices in non-religious organizational contexts. Moreover, research that integrates semiotic analysis with Islamic communication perspectives, especially using Roland Barthes' framework to uncover ideological meanings in corporate social media content, remains underdeveloped.

Theoretically, organizational communication scholarship positions organizational culture as a strategic asset that shapes both internal behavior and external legitimacy (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021) and (Men & Bowen, 2016) Visual communication on social media plays a crucial role in building trust, credibility, and moral legitimacy in the eyes of the public. From a semiotic perspective, Barthes' approach enables

researchers to move beyond surface meanings by examining denotative, connotative, and ideological layers embedded in visual texts. Study (Tawami et al., 2022) demonstrate that visual branding and symbolic representation carry ideological power in shaping institutional identity. However, these studies rarely engage with ethical and religious value frameworks, particularly Islamic communication, as an interpretive lens. Based on this state of the art, a clear research gap emerges.

There is a lack of in-depth studies that analyze the representation of organizational cultural values in social media content of state-owned enterprises using semiotic analysis, while simultaneously situating these representations within the framework of Islamic communication and *da'wah*. Existing research on Islamic work ethics in digital media tends to focus on explicit religious discourse, whereas this study examines ethical communication as *da'wah bil hāl*, the transmission of moral values through exemplary practice and symbolic action rather than verbal preaching (Singh et al., 2020; Lim et al., 2022). This research addresses that gap by analyzing visual and verbal content from the Instagram account @livingintelkom, specifically an Instagram Reels post representing Telkom Indonesia's organizational culture.

This account serves as an internal-external communication medium that showcases employees' daily work life, innovation, and corporate values. From an Islamic communication perspective, Instagram serves as a space for *da'wah bil hāl*, where values such as integrity, service excellence, responsibility, courage, and agility are conveyed through visual narratives that appeal to audiences emotionally and symbolically. The novelty of this study lies in three aspects: (1) the application of Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis to Instagram Reels content to uncover ideological meanings of organizational culture; (2) the focus on a state-owned enterprise as a public actor in ethical digital communication; and (3) the integration of organizational culture analysis with Islamic communication and *da'wah* perspectives. This study aims to analyze how Telkom Indonesia's organizational cultural values are constructed through visual and verbal signs, to interpret their denotative and connotative meanings, and to reveal their alignment with Islamic communication principles. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to media semiotics and Islamic communication studies, and practically to the development of ethical, value-based digital communication strategies in the contemporary media landscape.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive–interpretive design, utilizing Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis as the primary analytical framework. The qualitative approach is chosen because the research does not seek to measure variables statistically, but rather to explore, interpret, and reveal the symbolic meanings, values, and ideologies embedded in visual and verbal representations of organizational communication on social media. (Ilhami et al., 2024). The descriptive interpretive design allows for an in-depth description of communication phenomena while enabling critical interpretation of denotative, connotative, and ideological (*mythical*) meanings constructed through Instagram content.

In semiotic qualitative research, data sources are not individual respondents but symbolic texts. Therefore, the primary data source of this study is Instagram Reels content published on the official account @livingintelkom. To avoid thin data and strengthen analytical validity, this study analyzes five (5) Instagram Reels videos that represent Telkom Indonesia's organizational culture, particularly those themed around behavioral norms, work ethics, and professional conduct, including the "Do's & Don'ts Telkomers" series. The selection of multiple Reels is intended to capture consistency, variation, and repetition of value representation, which are crucial for identifying dominant cultural narratives and ideological patterns in semiotic analysis.

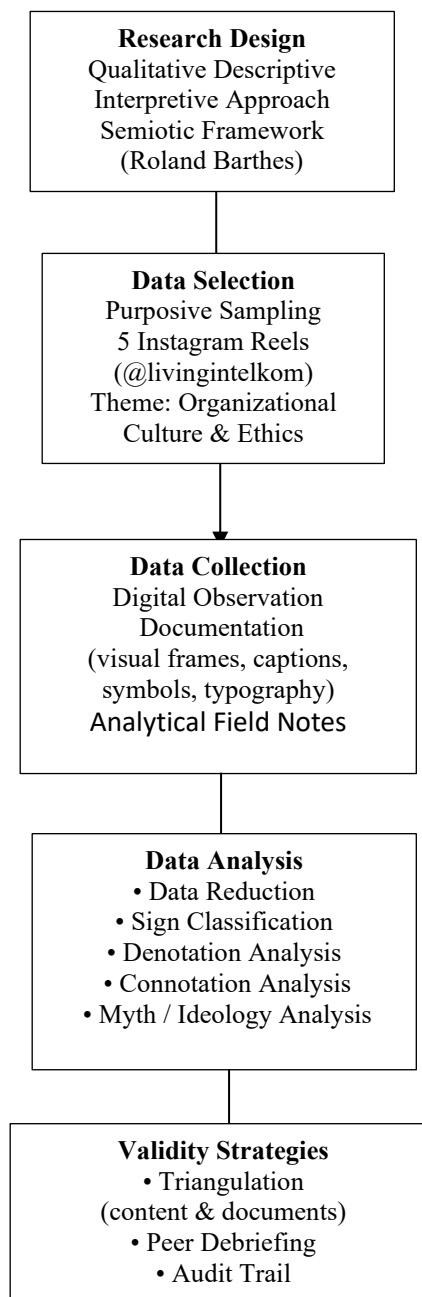
Analyzing several videos enables thematic saturation and allows triangulation across content, thereby increasing the credibility of the findings. Data were selected using purposive sampling, based on theoretically grounded criteria rather than popularity or virality alone (Putri & Murhayati, 2025). The selected Reels meet the following criteria: Published by the official @livingintelkom Instagram account, Explicitly or implicitly represent Telkom Indonesia's organizational cultural values (e.g., *integrity, discipline, service excellence, agility, and professionalism*), Employ clear visual and verbal signs (*visual composition, gestures, symbols, captions, text overlays, colors, and audio*) that allow denotative, connotative, and ideological analysis, Belong to the same thematic cluster (*organizational ethics and behavioral norms*), enabling comparative and cross-content analysis (Ackerman, 2010). The "Do's & Don'ts Telkomers" Reels were selected not because of virality, but because they function as normative organizational texts that explicitly regulate behavior and symbolically communicate ethical standards. These videos are considered representative of Telkom Indonesia's institutional effort to internalize work culture through digital visual communication.

Data collection was conducted through Digital observation, by systematically observing selected Reels to identify recurring visual and verbal signs related to organizational culture. Documentation involves collecting screenshots, video frames, captions, hashtags, audio elements, typography, color schemes, and visual composition. Analytical field notes, to record contextual information (upload timing, narrative structure, symbolic emphasis) and initial interpretive impressions. To strengthen data validity, the social media content was triangulated with official Telkom Indonesia documents, particularly those related to organizational culture and the Digital Way of Working. (Imran, 2015). Data analysis follows Roland Barthes' semiotic framework and is conducted through the following stages. Data reduction: selecting relevant visual and verbal signs from each Reels video. Data classification: grouping signs into visual and verbal categories. Denotative analysis: identifying literal meanings of signs. Connotative analysis: interpreting implicit meanings related to emotions, values, and cultural associations. Mythological/ideological analysis: revealing how organizational cultural values are constructed, legitimized, and naturalized as dominant discourse (Subakti et al., 2023). The analysis is conducted manually through close reading of visual and textual data to ensure depth of interpretation and reflexivity. The credibility and trustworthiness of the research are ensured through Data triangulation, by comparing meanings across multiple Reels and organizational documents.

Peer debriefing, through discussions with academic peers or supervisors, to test interpretive consistency. Audit trail, by systematically documenting the analytical process. All data are derived from publicly accessible Instagram content (Figure 1). Although no human subjects are directly involved, ethical considerations are maintained by presenting content accurately, avoiding manipulation, and situating interpretations within an academic context. (Scott, 2021).

Methodological Flowchart (Textual Representation)

(Arianto, 2024).



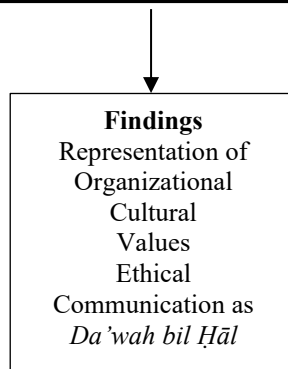


Figure 1 : Research Flow Diagram

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results


This section presents the results of the semiotic analysis on the representation of Telkom Indonesia's organizational cultural values in Instagram Reels content published by the @livingintekom account. The analysis applies Roland Barthes' semiotic framework to examine how denotative and connotative meanings are constructed through visual and verbal signs, and how these meanings function ideologically to normalize certain patterns of work behavior. The analyzed Reels are drawn from the *"Do's & Don'ts Telkomers Edition,"* a thematic series that explicitly frames acceptable and unacceptable conduct within the organizational environment. At the denotative level, the Reels depict everyday workplace situations involving Telkom employees, such as interacting with colleagues, attending meetings, using digital devices, and performing tasks in office settings. Visual signs include standardized work attire, corporate attributes, office interiors, body gestures, facial expressions, and on-screen textual labels indicating *"Do"* or *"Don't."* These elements literally signify routine professional activities within a modern corporate workspace. The verbal signs, presented as short textual commands or prohibitions, function as explicit behavioral cues that guide viewers toward preferred modes of conduct. However, at the connotative level, these visual and verbal signs produce meanings that go beyond the depiction of everyday work routines. Positive behaviors categorized as *"Do"* are consistently associated with calm gestures, focused expressions, orderly environments, and collaborative interactions, connoting values of discipline, responsibility, professionalism, and service orientation. Conversely, behaviors labeled as *"Don't"* are visually framed through exaggerated gestures, distracted expressions, or disorganized situations, connoting irresponsibility, inefficiency, and deviation from organizational norms.




Through this oppositional structure, the content implicitly constructs a moral binary between *"ideal"* and *"undesirable"* Telkom employees. From a Barthesian perspective, this repetitive pattern of denotative and connotative signs gives rise to a myth or ideological meaning. The Reels naturalize the idea that professionalism, discipline, and ethical conduct are not merely organizational rules, but inherent and unquestionable characteristics of a *"true Telkomer."* Organizational values are thus transformed into common-sense assumptions that appear natural, neutral, and universally accepted. The visual narrative positions ethical work behavior as something that should be performed effortlessly and continuously, thereby legitimizing corporate norms as moral imperatives. In this sense, the Instagram Reels function not only as internal communication tools, but also as symbolic mechanisms for cultural internalization and moral regulation in the digital space. The


representation of organizational culture operates as a form of ethical persuasion, where employees and audiences are invited to identify with the idealized image of professionalism constructed by the organization. From the perspective of Islamic communication, this process aligns with the concept of *da'wah bil hāl*, as ethical values such as integrity, responsibility, and excellence are conveyed through visual practice and exemplary behavior rather than explicit religious discourse. Thus, the @livingintelkom Reels serve as a digital site where organizational culture, ethical communication, and value transmission intersect and are continuously reproduced research.

Table 1 Instagram Reels Content Analysis Table


Source: Instagram @livingintelkom, processed by researchers, 2024).

No.	Unit of Analysis (Snippets Reels)	Denotation	Connotations
1.		<p>The image shows two Telkom employees wearing work uniforms and ID cards, standing in the office environment. The two smiled and raised their index fingers upwards. At the top of the image there is the text "<i>Do's & Don'ts Telkomers Edition</i>" which shows educational content regarding rules or guidelines of conduct for Telkom employees.</p>	<p>The image represents the internalization of Telkom's organizational cultural values through a positive, relaxed, and participatory approach. Cheerful expressions and upward-pointing gestures annotate the employee's call, awareness, and commitment to understanding and implementing the <i>do's and don'ts</i>. This content establishes the meaning that compliance with the rules is not coercion, but part of Telkomers' collective identity and professionalism in carrying out the company's work culture.</p>

No.	Instagram Reels Content Analysis @livingintelkom		
	Unit of Analysis (Snippets Reels)	Denotation	Connotations
2.		<p>The image shows a Telkom employee wearing a work uniform and ID card, standing in the office area near the elevator while looking at the mobile phone held in his hand. The background shows the interior of the office building with the floor number "29" and the elevator door closed. At the top of the image is a red "Don't X Fill Daily Activity" text that marks discouraged behavior.</p>	<p>Images annotate negligent and undisciplined behavior in the context of work. The activity of playing mobile phones is constructed as a symbol of neglect of administrative responsibilities, especially the obligation to fill <i>in daily activities</i>. The red cross (X) confirms that this behavior is contrary to the organization's cultural values, such as discipline, accountability, and professionalism, and is positioned as an act that is not in accordance with the ideal identity of Telkom employees.</p>
3.		<p>The image shows a Telkom employee wearing a work uniform and ID card, standing in the office area near the elevator. He is seen using a mobile phone. At the top of the image there is the text "Do's ✓ Fill in the Daily Activity" which shows the recommendations or behaviors that must be done by the employee.</p>	<p>The image annotates compliance, discipline, and work responsibility as the main values of Telkom's organizational culture. The activity of filling <i>in daily activities</i> is interpreted as a symbol of employee accountability and professionalism in the digital work system. The checkmark (✓) reinforces the meaning that the behavior is considered right, ideal, and expected by the organization, as well as being part of the identity of Telkom employees who are orderly and aware of administrative obligations.</p>
4.		<p>The image shows a Telkom employee wearing a work uniform and ID card, sitting at a desk while holding a mobile phone in a horizontal position as if playing a game. Facial expressions seem to be</p>	<p>Images annotate unproductive behavior and abuse of work time. Gaming activities during working hours are constructed as a symbol of neglect of professional responsibilities and contrary to organizational cultural values such as discipline, focus, and</p>

No.	Instagram Reels Content Analysis @livingintelkom		
	Unit of Analysis (Snippets Reels)	Denotation	Connotations
		<p>focused on the phone screen. The background shows the office area with rows of storage lockers numbered "54" and "55" and the lighting of the workspace. At the top of the image is the text "Don't ✗ Play Games during Working Hours" with a red background that marks the prohibition of the activity.</p>	<p>professionalism. The red cross (✗) confirms that this behavior is an unacceptable act in Telkom's work culture and is positioned as an example of an attitude that employees must avoid.</p>
5.		<p>The image shows a Telkom employee wearing a work uniform and ID card, sitting at a desk while using a laptop. Facial expressions appear to be focused on the screen. On the table can be seen work equipment. The background shows the office area with rows of lockers numbered "55", "57", and "63" and the lighting of the workspace. At the top of the image there is the text "Do's ✓ Maintain Professionalism in Working Hours" which marks the behavior recommended by the company.</p>	<p>The image annotates professional work ethic, focus, and productivity as the main values of Telkom's organizational culture. The activity of working with a laptop is interpreted as a symbol of commitment, responsibility, and discipline of employees in carrying out their duties. The checkmark (✓) confirms that this behavior is the ideal action that the organization expects, while building the image of Telkom employees as professional and performance-oriented individuals.</p>

No.	Instagram Reels Content Analysis @livingintelkom		
	Unit of Analysis (Snippets Reels)	Denotation	Connotations
6.		<p>The image shows a Telkom employee wearing a work uniform and ID card, standing in the office exit area while looking at the mobile phone held in his hand. Facial expressions appear neutral and focused on the screen. The background shows an office corridor with glass doors, green floors, and a green EXIT sign at the top. In the upper center of the image there is the text "Don't X Return to Molor from Meal Hour (14.00)" with a red background that marks the behavior that is not recommended.</p>	<p>Images annotate time indiscipline and low work responsibilities. Returning late from mealtime is constructed as a symbol of disregard for rules and professional commitment. The red cross (X) confirms that this behavior is contrary to the organization's cultural values, especially discipline, punctuality, and work ethic, and is positioned as an attitude that Telkom employees must avoid.</p>
7.		<p>The image shows a Telkom employee wearing a work uniform and ID card, standing in the glass door area of the office while looking at the clock on his wrist. He carried a drink bottle and wore a sling bag. Facial expressions appear neutral and focus on the clock. The background shows an office corridor with glass doors and a green EXIT sign at the top. In the upper center of the image there is the text "Do's ✓ Lunch Break According to Schedule (12.00-13.00)" with a blue background</p>	<p>The image annotates time discipline, adherence to rules, and professional responsibility. The gesture of looking at the clock symbolizes awareness of time management and commitment to running a work schedule. The checkmark (✓) reinforces the meaning that complying with the stipulated rest hours is an ideal behavior that reflects work ethic, order, and professionalism as part of Telkom's organizational culture.</p>

No.	Instagram Reels Content Analysis @livingintelkom		
	Unit of Analysis (Snippets Reels)	Denotation	Connotations
		marking the recommended behavior.	
8.		<p>The image shows a Telkom employee wearing a work uniform, standing at the office entrance area with an automatic access system. He was seen opening the bag as if he was looking for something. The background shows the interior of the lobby of the building with a large screen on the wall and a gate access device at the front. At the top of the image is the text "Don't X Bring ID Card" with a red background that marks the behavior that is not recommended.</p>	<p>The image annotates omission of security procedures and non-compliance with organizational rules. The act of not carrying an ID card is represented as a symbol of a lack of awareness of identity, access control, and professional responsibility. The red cross (X) confirms that this behavior is contrary to Telkom's organizational cultural values, especially discipline, security, and professionalism, and is positioned as an attitude that must be avoided by employees.</p>

The results show that @livingintelkom Instagram Reels content, especially Telkomers Edition's Do's & Don'ts series, consistently represents Telkom Indonesia's organizational cultural values. The reels function not only as informative content but also as symbolic media that construct an understanding of ideal work behavior within the Telkom environment. Through visual footage of Do's & Don'ts, the @livingintelkom account presents work ethics guidelines that are packaged lightly, visually, and relevant to employees' daily lives. At the level of denotative meaning, Reels displays employees' daily activities in the office environment, such as filling out daily activities, working using laptops, complying with break hours, carrying ID cards, as well as examples of discouraged behavior such as playing games during working hours, not carrying ID cards, and returning late from meals.

The visual displays individuals, workspaces, office attributes, and supporting text "Do's" and "Don'ts" that directly show what is allowed and what is prohibited in the context of work. At the level of connotative meaning, the visual footage of Do's & Don'ts represents Telkom's organizational cultural values, such as discipline, professionalism, responsibility, time management, compliance with rules, and awareness of the digital work system. Checkmarks (✓) and crosses (X) not only serve as markers of right and wrong, but also contain symbolic meaning as a form of normalization of ideal work behavior. These reels build the meaning that the ideal Telkom employee is an orderly, productive, procedurally aware individual, and able to adapt to modern and digital work culture. Through a lighthearted visual approach and a persuasive narrative, Instagram Reels @livingintelkom

work as a signage system that not only displays the reality of work, but also constructs that reality. In the perspective of Roland Barthes' semiotics, this content of Do's & Don'ts shows how the denotative meaning of daily work activities is transformed into a connotative meaning that is full of organizational values and ideologies. Thus, Reels acts as a medium for internalizing organizational culture as well as a tool for forming Telkom's corporate identity in the digital space.

Discussion

Representation of Organizational Cultural Values in Instagram Content (*Semiotics Study on Instagram Accounts @livingintelkom*)

This discussion critically interprets the findings on the representation of Telkom Indonesia's organizational cultural values in the Instagram Reels content of @livingintelkom, particularly the *"Do's & Don'ts Telkomers Edition,"* by situating them within semiotic theory, organizational communication literature, and Islamic communication ethics. Rather than merely describing visual content, this section engages in a theoretical dialogue to assess how the findings support, extend, or challenge existing frameworks. At the denotative level, the Reels content portrays everyday workplace practices such as logging daily activities, using laptops in workspaces, wearing ID cards, observing break schedules, and avoiding unproductive behavior during working hours. These representations confirm (Sundar, 2020). Proposition that digital media, especially algorithm-driven platforms like Instagram, no longer function as neutral channels but actively shape meaning through selective visual framing. The findings support Sundar's theory by demonstrating that Reels content is designed not only to inform but also to guide interpretation through simplified visual cues, repetition, and affective imagery.

At the connotative level, this study reinforces and extends the arguments of (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021) who emphasize the persuasive power of curated visuals in constructing organizational identity. The consistent use of visual binaries ✓ (Do) and ✗ (Don't) confirms their claim that Instagram enables organizations to embed values implicitly through aesthetic and narrative strategies. However, this research goes beyond Djafarova and Bowes by showing that such visuals do not merely shape external brand perception, but also operate as internal symbolic control mechanisms. In this sense, the findings challenge the tendency in prior studies to frame Instagram primarily as an external branding tool, revealing its dual function as both external image construction and internal cultural regulation. From a Barthesian perspective, the repetition of these visual and verbal signs produces a myth that naturalizes Telkom's organizational culture as orderly, disciplined, digital, and performance-oriented. This supports Barthes' assertion that ideology works most effectively when it appears natural and unquestioned. The Reels format short, repetitive, and algorithmically circulated intensifies this myth-making process, confirming (Men & Bowen, 2016) argument that social media representations tend to idealize and normalize institutional realities. The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating how this myth is compressed and accelerated through Reels, making cultural values more pervasive and easily internalized. This confirms that social media functions as a medium for cultural education, closely

reflecting the reality of employees' daily work. These findings are consistent with research (Men & Bowen, 216) which states that the organization's social media serves as a *Culture-sharing platform*, where organizational values are communicated through everyday practice, not solely through slogans or formal documents. Research (Jegalus, 2024) also affirms that Instagram allows organizations to build a more authentic representation of work culture through the power of visuals and concise narratives.

However, this study shows novelty compared to previous studies because it not only identifies the function of cultural communication, but also unravels how visual and verbal signs work as a system of signification that shapes the ideological meaning of work culture through mechanisms *showing that the Do's and Don'ts format serves as a cultural code*. Thus, this study expands the study of organizational communication from functional aspects to the analysis of symbolic meaning. Compliant employees are represented as "ideal Telkomers", while deviant behavior is positioned as an act that is not in accordance with the corporate identity. These findings are in line with research (Kautsar et al., 2025) which states that visual communication of an organization is ideological because it defines standards of behavior that are considered normal and professional. The difference is that research (Santoso et al., 2025) emphasizes the organization's visuals more in the context of external branding, whereas this research shows that Instagram visuals also serve as an internal symbolic control mechanism that shapes employee cultural awareness. Thus, this study highlights the dual function of social media as an internal-external communication space. *The 'Do's & Don'ts Telkomers Edition' content can be understood as a soft control strategy in organizational cultural communication*. Instead of using formal and hierarchical instructions, Telkom packages work values and norms through light, persuasive, and easy-to-understand visuals. This strategy shows a shift in organizational communication from the *command and control* Towards a symbolic and participatory approach (Priyanto, 2025) and (Rahmatika & Khoirullina, 2021).

Integration of Corporate Values and Islamic Work Ethics in the Digital Era

From the perspective of Islamic communication, the findings reveal that the organizational values represented in @livingintekom Reels resonate strongly with Islamic work ethics, even though the institution itself is not explicitly religious. Islam views ethical work behavior as universal (*al-akhlāq al-karīmah*), applicable in all professional contexts. Values such as discipline, responsibility, professionalism, and service excellence correspond with Islamic principles of *amanah* (trustworthiness), *itqān* (excellence in work), and *mas'uliyah* (accountability). The visualization of employees smiling while pointing upward or gesturing affirmatively can be interpreted through Islamic ethical concepts. Rather than being a superficial symbol of positivity, such gestures signify *ta'āwun* (mutual cooperation) and *iltizām* (commitment to shared rules). In Islamic communication ethics, effective communication should follow *qaulan sadīdan* (truthful and clear speech) and *qaulan karīman* (respectful and dignified expression).

The Do's & Don'ts format reflects *qaulan sadīdan* by providing clear distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable behavior, reducing ambiguity and encouraging *tabayyūn* (clarification) in organizational conduct. Moreover, the persuasive and non-coercive nature of the visuals aligns with the principle of *da'wah bil hāl*, where moral values are conveyed through exemplary actions rather than verbal preaching. Instead of commanding employees through rigid hierarchical instructions, Telkom's communication strategy adopts a soft-control approach that invites voluntary internalization of values. This

reflects the Qur'anic ethic of persuasion through wisdom (*hikmah*) and good counsel (*mau'izhah hasanah*), as emphasized in QS. An-Nahl: 125. Critically, this study demonstrates that Islamic communication analysis need not be confined to explicitly religious symbols or institutions. By examining how ethical values compatible with Islamic teachings are visualized and normalized in a state-owned enterprise's digital communication, this research expands the scope of Islamic communication studies into the domain of contemporary organizational media practices. Instagram Reels thus emerge as an ideological space where corporate values and Islamic work ethics intersect, are negotiated, and reproduced in the digital era. Overall, this discussion confirms, extends, and critically enriches existing theories of digital organizational communication.

The findings of this study support Sundar's (2020) and Djafarova and Bowes' (2021) regarding the persuasive and meaning-making power of social media visuals, while also extending their arguments by demonstrating how Instagram Reels function as mechanisms of symbolic control and ethical normalization. By integrating Barthes' semiotics with Islamic communication ethics, this study provides a more comprehensive framework for understanding how organizational culture is represented, legitimized, and internalized through digital media. Consistent with (Johansen & Gregersen, 2024) and (Hidayati & Gufron, 2024) corporate social media content operates as a form of implicit normative control through visual narratives. However, this study offers a novel contribution by showing that the "Do's and Don'ts" format serves as a cultural code that simplifies complex organizational values into a visual dichotomy, making them more accessible and easily internalized by audiences.

At the mythic level, Reels content from @livingintelkom constructs Telkom's work culture as orderly, modern, digital, and performance-oriented. Through the repetitive visualization of time discipline, administrative compliance, and professionalism, these values are naturalized as ideal and unquestioned norms. In line with Barthes' perspective, myth functions to transform ideological constructs into seemingly natural realities (Mufidah & Hidayat, 2019). These findings also align with (Rose-Redwood et al., 2018) which highlights how organizational culture on social media is often presented in an idealized and normative form. This study deepens that perspective by emphasizing the role of short, repetitive, and algorithm-driven Reels formats in reinforcing the internalization of these values.

However, this research adds a new dimension by showing how the myth is constructed through a short, repetitive, algorithm-based Reels format, thereby reinforcing the pervasiveness and internalization of cultural values (Asis Nota, 2024) and (Qodir & Sight, 2023). Overall, the results of this study show consistency with Barthes' semiotic theory and previous research on organizational cultural communication on social media. The novelty of this research lies in the use of Barthes semiotic analysis on the content of Reels of SOE corporations to reveal functions *Do's & Don'ts* as a mechanism for normalization and symbolic control of work culture and then the meaning of Instagram as an ideological space where organizational culture is produced and legitimized. Thus, this research not only enriches the study of digital organizational communication but also makes a conceptual contribution in understanding how organizational culture is represented, naturalized, and internalized through social media.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the representation of Telkom Indonesia's organizational culture values through visual and verbal signs in the Instagram Reels content of the @livingintelkom

account, with a particular focus on the *Do's & Don'ts Telkomers Edition*. By applying Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, the research revealed how denotative, connotative, and ideological meanings are constructed and naturalized through short-form digital content. At the denotative level, the Reels portray routine workplace activities and behavioral practices. At the connotative level, these visual and verbal signs construct symbolic meanings related to discipline, professionalism, responsibility, and compliance with organizational norms. At the ideological level, the content functions to normalize an idealized corporate culture aligned with modernity, digital efficiency, and performance orientation, positioning Telkomers as ethical and disciplined corporate subjects. Theoretically, this study contributes to Islamic communication and digital da'wah scholarship by demonstrating that organizational social media content can operate as *da'wah bil hāl*, where ethical values are communicated through exemplary work practices rather than explicit religious discourse.

By integrating semiotics, organizational culture studies, and Islamic communication, this research expands the scope of Islamic communication beyond religious institutions to include ethical value transmission in contemporary corporate settings. Practically, the findings offer insights for communication practitioners, corporate media managers, educators, and policymakers on the strategic use of visual storytelling to internalize organizational values and ethics in digital environments. The study also encourages critical media literacy by highlighting how values and ideologies are embedded in seemingly neutral or entertaining social media content. The novelty of this research lies in its application of Barthes' semiotic analysis to corporate Instagram Reels within the framework of Islamic communication and broadcasting. Unlike prior studies that focus primarily on engagement metrics or branding effectiveness, this study reveals social media as an ideological space for cultural normalization and moral regulation. While the study is limited by its qualitative and interpretive nature and its focus on a specific set of Reels content, it provides a foundation for future research to explore audience reception, comparative organizational contexts, and cross-platform analyses.

Overall, this study demonstrates that Instagram Reels @livingintelkom function not merely as informational or promotional media, but as symbolic arenas where organizational culture and ethical values are continuously produced, legitimized, and internalized in the digital era.

Declaration of AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

During the preparation of this work, the authors used ChatGPT to assist in refining sentence structure, improving academic language clarity, and enhancing coherence in selected sections of the manuscript. After using this tool, the authors carefully reviewed, edited, and revised all content as needed and take full responsibility for the integrity, accuracy, and originality of the final published version.

CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

Fuad Adi Putra: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – Original Draft, and Formal Analysis. Dina Hadi Lana: Data Curation, Investigation, and Writing – Review & Editing. Yunita Sari: Validation, Visualization, and Supervision.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings of this study, particularly the analysis of Instagram Reels content, are available within the article. Further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Ethical Approval Statement

The authors confirm that this study adheres to ethical research standards. This research involves the analysis of publicly accessible social media content (Instagram) and does not involve direct interaction with human participants or patient-identifying information; therefore, formal ethical approval was not required..

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Fuad Adi Putra is a student of the communication science study program at Prof. Dr. Moestopo Agama University, she is the lead author in this study. Dina Hadi Lana is students of the communication science study program at Prof. Dr. Moestopo Agama University, she is assistants in this research. Yunita Sari is a permanent lecturer in communication science at Prof. Dr. Moestopo Agama University, she is also a supervisor and provides input on this research.