

Feminist Digital Activism in Building Social Awareness of Women Issue in Post Pandemic Era

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze visual narrative content on Instagram as a form of feminist digital activism in a post-pandemic era. In addition, it will study further how the social cognitive learning process through the visual narrative has the potential to encourage the formation of social awareness of women's issues in Indonesia. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method completed by narrative analysis. At the same time, data was collected through in-depth interviews with Jakarta Feminist actors and by analyzing Jakarta Feminist Instagram content using the Greimas actant model throughout April 2022. The study results show that the visual narrative uploaded by Jakarta Feminist has shown vital inclusiveness and collaborative effort to build social awareness regarding women's issues. Although technically, audio-visual content through digital platforms has not been maximized yet, the series of actants have described the collective goals and expectations of social issues. On the other hand, stereotypes and social prejudice must be faced in growing social awareness about the importance of a gender-egalitarian society.

1. Introduction

Social media provides flexibility for individuals to learn in a borderless environment. Studies show that the digital environment has fundamentally increased the surge of activism, which intensifies the flow and efficiency of specific ideologies (Amaral 2020). Social media, then, promote content and information diets, guided and endorsed by personal beliefs and emotions (Giuliani et al. 2019; Rochlin 2017). The increasingly pervasive feminist movement, which was blown by globalization and strengthened by communication on the issue of gender inequality in Indonesia, gave birth to digital activities on social media that promote knowledge and movements based on the idea of equality and justice for women.

Among those groups which focus on feminist digital activism is Jakarta Feminist. This group tries to present engaging content on their Instagram with hopes that it can become a means of educating women on their fundamental rights as individuals and members of society. Those contents create a visual narrative that currently becomes a choice in social media platforms to convey a message aiming to broaden audiences' knowledge. It also aims to share an experience to persuade any level of reader's cognition about women's issues. Being in an environment with most patriarchal values, Indonesian women need knowledge about their

collective identity since feminism should be understood as more than gender ideology. Collective identity is the shared definition of a group that derives from members' common interests, experiences, and solidarity (Pelak et al. 2006). Building knowledge about collective identity should create a sense of belonging and support system, helping women know that they are not alone in certain situations, especially when they need support in unfavorable conditions.

The absence of support systems could make women feel alone, and of course, it worsens their conditions (Basile et al. 2019). Fortunately, at this time, the issue of women's marginalization in many forms has begun to become a public topic, one of which is driven by the hecticness of conversations on online platforms such as social media. Discussion of the ratification of the Draft Law on the Crime of Sexual Violence (RUU TPKS) into law (UU) in April 2022 is an example of improving awareness of women's issues in Indonesia. Then, it is sufficient to say that social media platforms help disseminate non-institutionalized versions of social reality, as users publicly disclose their ideas and everyday knowledge (Fotopoulou 2016), especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, where news and interactions mostly circulated in this kind of interactive media. In 2022, the world has begun to enter a state of recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic. This post-pandemic condition is interesting because many people have started to get used to using digital platforms as the

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primary medium of interaction and information sources. However, the longing for direct interaction is undoubtedly very high, considering that face to face access was minimal before.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, many countries take 'physical distancing' strategies, which essentially involve restricting physical contact to the bare minimum required for daily living. This condition has increased the use of and dependence upon social media platforms to stay connected for work, education and social purposes (Wong et al. 2021). About the spread of awareness of this women's issue, the increasing dependence on social media consumption also increases the exposure that positively leads to awareness of this kind of related case. Social media allows individuals to give an account of their own stories and make those stories connect with other similar ones, making individual stories a collective political agenda (Clark-Parsons 2019). Knowledge sharing to build networking between actors is inevitable in reaching the collective identity. Based on the previous explanation, this research will focus on how visual narratives from Instagram content of Jakarta feminist convey ideas to build social awareness by having social cognitive learning processes.

1.1 Objectives

Feminist digital activism on social media is a growing movement. This study describes how visual narrative through social media content broadcast by Instagram accounts focuses on women's issues, using the actant model theory by Algirdas Greimas. In addition, it will study further how the social cognitive learning process through the visual narrative has the potential to encourage the formation of social awareness of women's issues in Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Feminist Digital Activism

In several previous studies, women are portrayed as gentle and emotional figures who need protection, while men are described as valiant and protective. This perspective is rooted in the understanding that women have to do domestic work while men get a broader role and access in society (Hubeis 2010). According to the traditional concept, men associated with those in power often impose their will on women. One form of violence against women is domestic violence. According to Hubeis (2010), domestic violence is any act that causes misery and suffering for women, both psychologically and sexually, including threats of specific actions. The causes are varied, ranging from deep-rooted patriarchal culture, misunderstanding of religious studies, economic pressure, and legalization in the culture of domestic violence to mental disorders. The treatment of violence experienced by women has been at the core of the struggle of the feminist group. While liberal feminism and existentialism are developing and starting

to spread through networked offline activities such as women's long march to raise awareness of the issue of equality, cyberfeminism, the fourth wave of feminism, was born and strengthened by the support of information technology and globalization. The values promoted by cyberfeminism are not much different from the ideals of its predecessors. The difference is how cyberfeminism sees digital platforms as a potential medium for women to build equality through digital discourse. With the more exploratory character of the digital platform, there is flexibility to build a narrative introducing women's issues to a broader audience.

Therefore, this study wants to see how far the narrative visualized in social media content openly brings women's issues into the public sphere, assuming that it affects the development of women's perspectives (Santoso 2011). The text, in this case, is seen from the Jakarta Feminist Instagram posts about violence against women, especially during Pandemic Covid-19. In patriarchal culture, women often find it difficult to express their voices about the cases that happened to them and their political perspectives. According to Kate Millet in Santoso (2011), text can be a way to answer problems. Through texts, women's problems can be known and then understood. This direct implication is in line with the Postmodern Feminist view, which thinks that women should have unrestricted access, both in the public and private spheres, reaffirmed by Cixous, who emphasizes that feminine texts allow changes in patriarchal arrangements (Tong & Botts 2018). By initiating women to write, women's issues that have been discussed 'behind the scenes can be more prominent and become a hope for the emergence of a better perspective on gender equality.

Digital activism is broad and ambiguous; for example, the focus of digital activism is not only limited to sending messages via the internet but also being carried out via the internet, including data piracy (Kaun and Uldam 2018). The study of feminist use of new media allows women to rise to the top in politics to bypass the interpretive controls exercised by mainstream media institutions (Walsh et al. 2015). One of them is proven through research conducted by Proitz et al. (2019), which describes the engagement and impact of Instagram on followers of Norwegian TV accounts, where the results show that what is posted on social media affects their way of life. In that article combining feminist media studies and psychology, it is found that social media contributes to providing ideas as a starting point for motivation for radical changes in depicting women's issues. In this case, social media can also create new opportunities to build connections with parties who have similar ideas. Feminist digital activism becomes interesting, especially if assuming that the mainstream media agenda mainly focuses on the chronology of violence rather than systemic causes (Edwards et al. 2020).

2.2 Social Awareness

As defined by Robbins (2018), social awareness focuses on what other people think and feel; social awareness is also related to the individual's ability to empathize with

others by using intuition to feel where people are coming from, learn body language, and pay attention to social cues. The form of social awareness that a person uses is influenced by three aspects, namely cognition, goals and motivation. Sheldon (1996) explains that everyone has habits or characteristics when paying attention to information obtained from their social environment. Social awareness is the ability to recognize and sympathize with people from various backgrounds and abilities. The social environment can help humans gather the social information needed to build liaisons between themselves and others in society.

2.3 Social Cognitive Learning Theory

SCLT (Social Cognitive Learning Theory) is a development of the SLT (Social Learning Theory) theory, which Banduras previously proposed. The difference is that SCLT is a learning theory that arises from the idea that people cognitively understand things by watching what others do. Human thought processes are central to understanding personality. This theory provides a framework for understanding, predicting, and changing human behavior (Green & Peil 2009). SCLT notes that people are more likely to be influenced by the model or message source they identify with. This theory also discusses the importance of rewards and punishments narrated in an idea intended to be stated. This theory supports message design strategies that promote message sources with whom audience members identify, new information for audience members to learn, demonstration of recommended actions through appropriate channels, and reinforcement or punishment as motivators for complying with message recommendations (Littlejohn and Foss 2009). Bandura proposes only a single internal principle comprised of three interacting elements in this theory, called triadic reciprocity, which involves a relationship between personal factors, behavior, and the environment. Though SCLT is useful to demonstrate how to engage in new behavior, Banduras argues that individuals learn both behaviors and cognitive strategies by observing the behavior of others, and these acquisitions can learn without being directly reinforced (Green & Peil 2009).

3. Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method completed by the visual narrative, which tries to explain how a sequence of pictures tells a story. Storytelling through pictures is sometimes better received than just words. The images themselves can arrange sequentially or singly; examples of sequential images are comic strips, while single images are found in news photos. This narrative examines the traditional aspects of verbal narratives, characters, places, and plots to explain the meaning. The most contemporary narrative focuses on language-based stories, both spoken and written, but thrives in exploring the structure and operation of visual narratives (Goodnow 2020). This method analyzes how images tell stories. Image, in this context, refers to a

finite sequence frame or a single frame. Sequential images are composed of separate frames that progress from one to the next. This storytelling image must convey a message in a limited space with accompanying sentences. Another scholar defines it as an analysis of narratives, both fictional (novels, poetry, folklore, fairytales, films, comics, music, and so on) and facts (such as news) (Eriyanto 2013).

The narrative analysis takes the story of an object as the research itself (Dunkley & Lewis 2018). Analysis in narrative studies paves the way for telling an experience, not just containing the most preferred use of language. The right question for narrative analysis is how a story is told since it was not natural, but humans told the stories themselves. An essential part of narrative analysis is the story and plot. According to Eriyanto (2013), there are two fundamental differences between story and plot. First, based on the integrity of the event. The story is a complete and actual event, from beginning to end, while the plot is an event explicitly shown in a text. Second, the differences are in the sequence of events. Stories show events in order, chronologically from beginning to end, while the plot can reverse the order.

The Algirdas Greimas' Actant model is chosen because there is a relationship between the narrator and the visual narrative content presented by the Jakarta Feminist on their Instagram accounts. Algirdas Greimas in Eriyanto (2013) makes an analogy of narrative as a structure of meaning (semantic structure). It is similar to a sentence that consists of words. Each word in the sentence occupies its respective position and function (as a subject, object, and predicate). A particular word also has a relationship with other words to create a coherent and meaningful unity. A narrative characterizes by six roles, which Greimas calls the actors, where these actants function to direct the course of the story. The actantial model, developed by Greimas, breaks an action down into six actants. The first one is subject explains a thing or condition that is what wants or does not want to be joined to the object. The object is the goal of the subject. The sender is what instigates the action, while the receiver is what benefits from it. Another actant is an adjuvant or a helper who helps accomplish the action, while a traitor is an opponent who hinders it.

4. Data Collection

The data in this study was obtained through in-depth interviews and Jakarta Feminist Instagram content throughout April 2022. The in-depth interview data was analyzed with data reduction and display (Miles & Huberman 1992), and Instagram content was analyzed by using the Greimas actant model. The Year 2022 is assumed to be the time to begin recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia, even almost worldwide. April itself in Indonesia is a month that is identical to women, especially in commemoration of Kartini, an icon of women's struggle, especially regarding equality in obtaining education in Indonesia. Jakarta Feminist Instagram content throughout April

2022 presents a visual narrative of twelve posts divided into two types. The first type is for content that focuses on discussing women's issues, consisting of five posts. Then the second type is content that narrates more general social issues, consisting of seven posts. The division of this type intends to classify the visual narrative analysis carried out.

Table 1. List of Jakarta Feminist Instagram Content in April 2022

Post Detail
April, 1 st 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/Cby1XCJL7Lo/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Rilis Bersama atas Putusan Kasus Kekerasan Seksual di Universitas Riau oleh PN Pekanbaru: KUHP, KUHP dan Perma 3/2017 Diabaikan, Kepentingan Korban Disingkirkan! (Type 1)
April, 4 th 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/Cb6zl4ML93K/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Gerakan Anti-feminisme di Korea Selatan dan Terpilihnya Presiden Yoon Suk Yeol (Type 1)
April, 5 th 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/Cb9OlhXPjm/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Kesal dan Ga Terima Bercandaan Seseorang Itu Wajar Kok! Yuk Kita Bahas (Type 2)
April, 8 th 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/CcFUdBVPCuP/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Apa yang Sedang Terjadi Saat Ini di Bucha, Ukraina? (Type 2)
April, 11 th 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/CcNdk1SPWwh/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Baleg DPR Tetap Menyetujui Pemekaran Papua Meski Ditolak Rakyat Asli Papua? (Type 2)
April, 12 th 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/CcPOPXUvHLz/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Selamat! Setelah 10 Tahun, RUU TPKS Akhirnya Disahkan Juga! Apa Saja ya Isinya? (Type 1)
April, 18 th 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/CcfRJwyPXU0/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Banyak Perusahaan Melebih-lebihkan Pencapaian Mereka dalam Perubahan Iklim. Greenwashing kah? (Type 2)
April, 19 th 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/CchKO21vhiE/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Mengapa Perlu UU PRT? (Type 1)
April, 19 th 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/CchawVzvI3Z/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Laporan Palsu akan Pemerkosaan Itu Umum Terjadi? Ini Mitos! (Type 2)
April, 20 th 2022

https://www.instagram.com/p/Cej3EqSvmO9/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Bagaimana Cara Mengajarkan Anak Soal Consent? (Type 2)
April, 21 st 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/CcmWoXIP-mH/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Hari Kartini Bukan Sekadar Peragaan Busana! (Type 1)
April, 22 nd 2022 https://www.instagram.com/p/CcpDDHzyKU6/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= Selamat Hari Bumi (Type 2)

5. Results and Discussion

Social awareness can be studied from cognition or knowledge, purpose and motivation. Cognition is the central aspect of one's awareness of a social issue because before understanding the goal of having the motivation to take action, proper knowledge is needed. Knowledge can be obtained from secondary sources and personal experience, and currently, there are many sources of information available out there. A multi-access online platform drives the abundance of information; almost anyone can produce, distribute and consume all the information they want as long as they are connected to the network. This platform also introduces social media as a place for mediated interaction, including absorbing information that could process into knowledge. Content with visual narratives on social media such as Instagram is a medium that is considered appropriate by some parties to build and spread social awareness about an issue, including issues that start from the position of women as individuals and social beings. The visual narrative in this study came from Jakarta Feminist Instagram throughout April 2022. Jakarta Feminist itself is one of the Women's March Jakarta (WMJ) initiators who actively campaign for social awareness regarding women's issues on digital platforms. Before further analysis related to social cognitive through uploaded content, there will be a description how the visual narrative through the analysis of Greimas' actant model based on each type as explained before,

The first type of Instagram content uploaded by Jakarta Feminist in April 2022 is content that focuses on issues about women. Based on Greimas' model, it said that the subject, which is a passive or active item as the main profile of a condition, is feminist digital activism. Digital activities carried out by groups supporting feminist ideas on social media platforms are generally aimed at building and increasing public awareness of issues and problems faced by women. Social awareness then becomes the object by narrating informative content through words and supported by related images. Informative content is the primary type that can provide new knowledge or restructure old knowledge. Narratives uploaded by Jakarta Feminists as senders are generally packaged in the form of storytelling information that tends to be historical. The visual narrative on April 21, 2022, features the figure of RA Kartini in historical story pieces, which are then

associated with the marginalization of women who have been and still are happening recently in Indonesia. Analyzing the uploaded sentence, generally, these visual narratives begin and end with something argumentative and persuasive with the body of content written in a descriptive or narrative style. This pattern is found in persuasive messages such as speech texts.

Unfortunately, images have not been used optimally by Jakarta Feminists. Coupled with quite long sentences as explanations, visual narratives like this tend to be unattractive, especially for digital natives such as Generation Z. If one of the primary audiences targeted is Generation Z, as said by the source, it is indispensable to have concise and eye-catching post. Furthermore, the social media platform, namely Instagram, becomes an adjuvant, helping to achieve the goals of the subject and sender. Instagram itself has quite a lot of audio-visual-based features. To maximize the influence of content, besides feeds, Jakarta Feminist should activate content sharing through reels that have a stronger audio-visual character so that possibility of information reaching and being remembered by the audience is more significant, including the possibility of being redistributed or reposted. Then, the traitor or opponent that hinders the achievement of the visual narrative goal uploaded by Jakarta Feminist, in general, is the lack of knowledge and the wrong perspective, which results in negative stereotypes of women. For example, the content, dated April 4, 2022, highlights the intricacies of the anti-feminist movement in South Korea. In Indonesia, content uploaded on April 1, 2022, discusses how the victims' interests of sexual harassment are often ignored on the pretext that power relations cannot be interpreted as violence and threats of violence. Besides, unequal power relations coupled with outdated stereotypes suppressing women will set a bad precedent for the continuation of gender equality in Indonesia.

Moreover, through an in-depth interview with the Jakarta Feminist actor, it was said that they strive for inclusiveness in every activity, including their digital activism. They also want to open a network by maintaining interactions and showing support to various communities, including marginalized ones such as the LGBTQ community. This inclusive effort is reflected in the uploads throughout April 2022, which through Greimas analysis, can describe as follows, The subject of the second type remains the same, but what is different is the object. In type two uploads, Jakarta Feminist shows how they are trying to be inclusive by raising issues that focus on women and society in general. This post can be seen from the headlines; even throughout April 2022, there are more uploads below general social issues flag rather than particular women issues, for example, in the upload on April 20, 2022, which discusses how to let children learn about body consent. In the upload, tips are given on making children understand their bodies and what they and others can do to them. This kind of issue is certainly not only useful for women in particular but also all members of society without exception, so the object of type two is social awareness of public issues. Next, the sender in type two is still the same as type one, but the receiver is slightly different, namely Jakarta Feminist audiences who are

not too segmented or more public in status. For issues regarding women, it is pretty common to know that the audience is merely segmented. According to Jakarta Feminist, some people are indeed a challenge because they think, for example, that the idea conveyed by the feminist community should not be a problem at all. Therefore, the focus of the Jakarta feminist movement is directed to people who do not know or have never touched on women's issues, hoping that they become aware and, at some points, support the community's goals. The social media platform is the adjuvant supporting the desired junction between subject and object. By raising issues affecting many people's lives on social media platforms, for example, regarding the rules for criminal acts of sexual violence, it will be helpful to gather public support, especially considering that the Indonesian people are pretty enthusiastic about discussing politics and government policies. By taking the right moment and appointing a suitable figure to represent a movement, the role of the feminist community is not impossible in the future. Traitors in these types two contents are more prejudiced than stereotyped. The significant difference between the two is that while stereotypes can be positive or negative inferences about a social group, prejudice is unjustifiable attitudes toward individuals or groups based on reinforced misinformation about a social group. Misguided social prejudice can be seen in a post on April 19, 2022, with the headline "Fake Reports of Rape Are Common? This is a Myth!" revealing presumption that reports of sexual violence are often just made up is not accurate, especially if one traces some research on this trend. In most cases, victim reports that are considered false or fabricated are accurate reports, where the percentage of truth will increase along with the number of reports on similar perpetrators.

In the study of social cognition, social prejudice is part of environmental factors. According to McCormick and Martinko (2004), people can learn by observing others, building a reciprocal influence with personal factors consisting of cognitive, affective and biological events. Social perspective about something will affect a person's personal view, which, although not absolute, can affect behavioral change. For this reason, the traitor such as social prejudice identified in the visual narrative uploaded by Jakarta Feminist requires special treatment through continuity of educational information on digital platforms and sociological approaches that are most likely accessible through educational institutions. Then if we talk about digital activism, freedom in production, distribution and consumption of content in digital platforms should be accompanied by knowledge of content sensitivity. This cognition is included in digital literacy skills that internet users must own. In addition to inclusiveness, knowledge about ethical responses to cases such as sexual violence must emphasize. Because sometimes, with the ease of sharing and reposting, some cross the line of appropriateness about content worth sharing on social media.

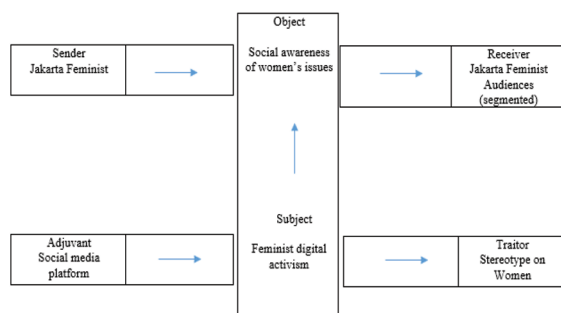


Fig. 1. Visual Narrative of Type 1

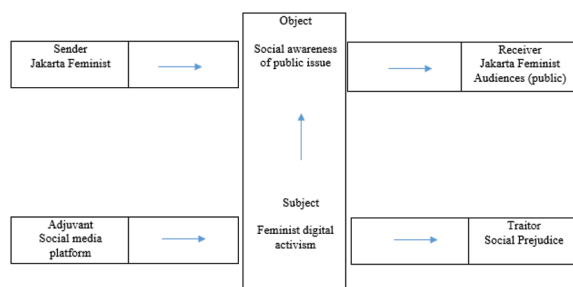


Fig. 2. Visual Narrative of Type 2

Meanwhile, the post-pandemic era is a time full of challenges. It requires being adaptive and innovative in dealing with dynamics, including changes in interaction and communication patterns. The habit of doing digital interactions will be tested with something hybrid in nature because it seems unlikely that the pattern of life will return entirely to the time before the pandemic. This hybrid pattern requires the ability to move from one medium to another simultaneously. This condition will undoubtedly impact digital activism carried out by feminists, at least on how they present and get closer to the public heart, then on how to build hybrid collaborations with the broader community. More significant and more comprehensive collaboration carried out by the community can be directed to achieve common goals, for example, to fight for laws and regulations that guarantee women's rights. Betz (2007), who supports Bandura's basic assumption of SCLT, stated that behavior is directed toward particular goals, and it eventually becomes self-regulated. Collaboration also allows the community to avoid a spiral of silence pattern, where minority voices will always sink below the majority, because the bigger a group with the same goals in terms of number and quality of movement, the easier it will be to build social awareness which is expected to lead toward improved behavior and action in society.

6. Conclusion

Visual narrative in social media content intended for education should produce consistently and continuously. To not seem heavy, the narrative must be made more concise and sharper, and the visuals must be attractive at a glance. Consumption of informative content is quite tricky. If it is too long, it will be boring,

but if it is too short, there is a concern about reducing the essence of the message. So, the character of the intended audience must map to create content that fits the target. Short infographics, consisting of one or a maximum of two pages with short sentences and additional graphics, will make it easier for the audience to read the development of an issue or condition, enabling a higher level of engagement, especially for a young audience. The Greimas actant model used to analyze the visual narration uploaded by Jakarta feminist illustrates that feminist digital activism can direct in addition to achieving the community's specific goals in ensuring good treatment of women as individuals and members of society. Meanwhile, it can also be directed to discuss other social issues. Inclusive uploads by the feminist community will positively build broader social awareness about the existence and messages brought by the community and embrace more parties to build beneficial collaborations, especially in realizing a gender-egalitarian society. Providing educative information by raising trending issues and building awareness about the existence of other organizations that can assist with women's problems is another thing that digital activism of the feminist community must focus on. Through collaboration, collective expectations can be built, in line with social cognitive learning that expectations about future consequences affect how we cognitively process new information. By building expectations regarding collective goals, along with descriptions of rewards and punishments, individuals will learn to understand the information brought by the community and not antipathy to feminist labels since feminist ideas are often still considered as the effect of globalization that is not following the social values that exist in Indonesian society. Observing and tracking trends is also essential to see whether an issue is widely discussed and whether the issue is worthy and provides more significant benefits for the public to know. Social awareness itself then is the goal and the basic idea to build a path to new cognition and then new behavior in society. For example, when people are starting to become aware of sexual harassment and violence, especially those faced by women, about laws that can protect them from these actions, the more people will report on these kinds of cases. The high level of case reporting is not a bad precedent for sexual harassment but a starting point that reflects the increasing social awareness of the issue. Further research can explore at how the collaboration of feminist digital activism can build a compelling narrative to reach all parties, including policymakers, to continuously support an egalitarian gender environment. Moreover, it is also interesting to examine the dynamics of stereotypes and prejudices regarding the feminist community in Indonesia.

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