

Environmental Activism and Social Media Cyber-advocacy: A Case Study from Indonesia

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Abstract

This study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the functions of social media for ENGOs (Environmental Non-Government Organization). Recently, ENGOs' presence on social media caught public attention due to the emergence of several offline protests that were initiated online. The research used content analysis on tweets posted by two ENGOs in Indonesia. The results showed that social media was used primarily to build public awareness regarding environmental issues in Indonesia. In this case, ENGOs tries to educate the public on the causes and consequences of environmental problems. One of the issues highlighted is infrastructure development which is currently underway in Indonesia. While infrastructure development fosters long term development, the process has been associated with detrimental effects on the environment. This research also found that the public can act as a vital source of information on environmental issues. Social media allow the public to connect virtual with the real world, thereby giving them the opportunity to participate in policy debates even in the absence of physical presence. That said, while social media is an important alternative channel for communicating positions and ideals, ENGOs still principally rely on mainstream media to reach a broader public, largely due to the digital divide that prevents certain people from active participation.

Keywords: *ENGO; social media; public sphere; online activism; environmental activism*

INTRODUCTION

Environmental problems continue to receive public attention in various parts of the world, with improving environmental governance achieving greater importance for local, regional, and global communities (Kurniawan & Rye, 2014). Capitalism has caused such environmental damage as over-exploitation of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, and the loss of a variety of rare animal species (Şen & Şen, 2016). These various problems have sparked the birth of social movements that have the common goals of jointly overcoming environmental problems through environmental activism.

One of the organizations that conduct environmental activism are environmental non-government organization (ENGO). ENGO plays an important role in mobilizing the public by drawing their attention to the need to participate in joint protests that take advantage of improvements in the reach of communication channels (McDonald, 2016; Murphy-Gregory, 2018). Traditionally, ENGO focused on mobilizing activists, protesting, lobbying, petitioning, raising awareness of problems, and encouraging the appreciation of nature (Karpus, 2018). ENGO has an important role in advocacy activities to protect and preserve the environment by inviting policymakers to change policies that are not pro-environment (Kellow, 2000).

Social media allows users (in this case, ENGO) to build and communicate a position or stance online (Hemmi & Crowther, 2013). Social media is an open and organized forum for deliberative democracy, or what Habermas (1989) calls a public sphere, where issues can be discussed freely (Coleman & Blumler, 2009). Social media operates through user-generated content by offering discursive online public spheres and offers space for those who intend to be actively involved in politics.

In addition, social media provides space for social movements to share digital content from various sources which are then re-contextualized and distributed (Loader, 2008). The communication which occurs between the organization and its supporters is multi-directional, with the organization and its followers producing and sharing content to form a whole public opinion (Hemmi & Crowther, 2013). In the study of environmental activism, social media functions as a complementary medium of traditional media which has become a major channel of social movements to communicate issues and campaign against environmental degradation (Hindmarsh & Luna, 2016). Besides, social media makes possible the production of new sources of knowledge which expand the protest repertoire (Earl & Kimport, 2011).

The growing practice of using social media by ENGOs invites researchers to

explore it, especially in regard to whether it can attract public attention toward environmental issues and government presence and attention to such concerns. Thus, this study contributes to understanding the role of new communication media, social media in particular, in attracting public involvement in environmental issues. This study aims to explore the function of social media in increasing environmental activism to protect the environment and promote environmental sustainability. To that end, research results contribute to understanding the function and role of social media as a major component of social communication that is relevant to the action. The presence of various environmental problems has led to the emergence of an online movement and environmental activism. Claims that social media increases public involvement is a topic that has not been explored much in academia.

The potential of social media in digital environmental activism has attracted the attention of researchers with keen interest in environment related issues. The major issue is whether or not the shift can encourage the emergency of better environmental governance. Previous research has focused more on ENGO's presence on platforms such as emails and websites (Kurniawan & Rye, 2014; Pickerill, 2003). Academics have also examined the use of Facebook by ENGO. McDonald (2016) explores the contribution of Facebook to encouraging public

participation in traditional ENGO protest activities. Other researchers examine user comments on Facebook which can encourage online social justice movements which drive traditional movements (Harlow, 2012; Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015). Nonetheless, there is no research that explores the use of social media by ENGO in campaigning for environmental issues to attract the public support activities and steps to urge the government to tackle environment related problems.

The following section presents literature review of environmental activism in the digital era which focuses on the use of the latest forms of media to campaign for environmental issues. Research methods is presented in section three, followed by a brief description of the ENGO, which is the locus of this study. Findings and discussion follows, and the last section presents a conclusion, and implications of the research results, limitations and recommendations for future research .

Environmental Activism in the Digital Age Social media, environmental activism, and public sphere

Research on the role of social media as a public sphere is an emerging field, which has contributed to making social media interactive (Kurniawan & Rye, 2014). Social media is a new representation of the public sphere because its interactive technology enables fundamental changes in

the workings of an organization (Bach & Stark, 2004). Social media contributes to the formation of a new public sphere and potentially also forms new ways of democracy (Fuchs, 2014; Kruse, Norris, & Flinchum, 2018). Social media as a public sphere to participate in a larger framework must be institutionalized along with the policy formulation procedure.

Environmental activism through social media has played an important part in increasing public involvement in environmental issues, which turn has contributed to improvement in environmental governance ((Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015). This form of activism includes efforts of individuals or groups who use social media to ignite discussions, distribute the latest information, attract public attention, mobilize the masses, invite others to sign online petitions, and so on. The increasing use of social media by environmental activists marks a shift in social movements, which use digital communication tools to maintain and improve environmental quality and public awareness of these matters (Kurniawan & Rye, 2014).

Discussions on social media by the protestants produce what is called an identity collectivity that represents public voices. Social media is the public sphere, which protest movements use in order to be heard by political actors. The collective

actions, according to Bennett & Segerberg (2012) are driven by the desire to share ideas, concepts, plans, and resources that have been internalized with other people's networks. The logic of connective action does not require collective identity, rather it facilitates participation opportunities that can be accessed by a diverse audience with minimal organizational resources (Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015).

Social media has led to the to expansion of public sphere. Nonetheless, the digital divide continues to thwart the immense potential of social (Bohman, 2004; Gurevitch, Coleman, & Blumler, 2009). Social media can be used by various groups in various locations, but most users are educated middle-class members (Gurevitch et al., 2009). Therefore, people who do not have access will continue to rely on conventional news, which sometimes deliver superficial information (Gurevitch et al., 2009). Although social media offers new and innovative ideas, the power of transformation is limited. Another challenge is that some protest movements receive the attention of the mass media, which covers and publishes their actions. On the contrary, protest movements that considered to be disturbing the 'peace' tend to gain negative perceptions from mass media unless they are supported by strong public opinion (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012).

Social movements and ENGO in the digital age

Social movements on social media have also been shown to be able to advocate public interests to encourage political actors and governments to change regulations, policies, or make new policies (Hwang & Kim, 2015; Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018). Social media enables civil society organizations to inform, organize, and motivate the public to act on environmental issues (Leeder, 2007). Social media as a public sphere allows ENGO to maintain direct communication with the public, which is independent of mass media (Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015).

The platforms which ENGO used to conduct environmental campaigns in the past included emails and websites. ENGO created a website to publish their profiles and activities (Pickerill, 2003). With the advent of social media, such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and other similar platforms, social movements have begun to use media to conduct campaigns and protests (Harlow, 2012). This presence does not only change the way ENGO campaigns on social media but also the nature of collective action (Earl & Kimport, 2011). The transformation is derived from the new logic of action called the logic of binding action, which is distinguished from the traditional logic of collective action (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). The logic of connective action

emphasizes the recognition of digital media as an organizing agent for mobilizing public votes. The emergence of a web-based community creates new forms of cultural production and ecological citizenship where environmental knowledge and environmental dialogue are shared quickly to a very broad audience (Rokka & Moisander, 2009).

Social media has facilitated ENGO and various social movements to fight for ideas and conception. It is a medium that diverse individuals and groups use and leverage to produce creative social relations and forms of democratic political possibilities (Kurniawan & Rye, 2014). This technology significantly influences general political activity by offering new channels to participate or modify various aspects that already exist. Perceptions about participation costs that were previously considered expensive are changed because of social media. At the same time, it increases the spectrum of political activity.

Cyber-advocacy

Advocacy in the cyber world, or what some researchers refer to as cyber-advocacy, is a form of advocacy in which non-governmental organizations, such as interest groups, communities, and various associations and social movement organizations, work to influence policies and decision-making procedures (Okura & Kaigo, 2016). Nongovernmental organizations play a critical role in the

polycymaking process in a democratic society (Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015; Xu & Zhang, 2020). They are portrayed as vehicles that are capable of exerting pressure on the government to safeguard the interests of marginalized groups (Han, 2014). Additionally, the government's response to the existence of non-governmental organizations was either positive or bad. The good answer is that, in addition to advocating for isolated communities' interests, they also enable communities to solve a variety of public challenges (Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015; Zhang & Skoric, 2019).

Non-governmental organizations advocate through a variety of media, one of which is social media, where citizens are present, active, and engaged in discussions on issues of current public concerns (Luxon, 2019; Zhang & Skoric, 2019). Government and society are connected via social media, which is referred to as the public sphere, as it serves as a conduit for information and knowledge about public issues and decisions necessary to address them (Zhang & Skoric, 2018). Non-governmental organizations have in part been responsible for igniting public debate on various issues of public concern and disseminating pertinent knowledge tailored toward increasing public awareness. Thus, the two reasons above, besides others, that are responsible for the high level of activity of NGOs on social media. Another factor that contributes to the surge in interest

in social media is the reality that social media has surpassed traditional mass media as the preferred medium for transmitting information from non-governmental organizations to the political system. In other words, social media today has become a sphere and common place that brings together non-governmental groups, communities, and governments for dialogue (Han, 2014).

METHODS

This study is an exploratory study that seeks to identify the use of social media by ENGOs. It is a case study of a particular ENGO located in Indonesia. Specifically, it analyzes the content of all the tweets of the ENGO from January to December 2019 based on prior review of the characteristics of each profile, including the tweets, followers, following, and the number of likes. Of various kinds of social media, this study chose Twitter because WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia's Twitter have the most followers compared to other social media. Specifically, this study focused on use of social media by ENGOs in 2019. The selection of the year was based on the consideration that Indonesia experienced a higher frequency of environmental issues in 2019 than in previous years. Statistics of deforestation and river pollution demonstrate that point well. For example, deforestation grew from 0.44 in 2017-2018 to 0.46 in 2018-

2019 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020) The number of rivers with moderate to severe pollution increased from 25 in 2001 to 38 in 2019 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020).

Method of collecting data

The dataset in this study consisted of a collection of tweets obtained through API Twitter. The tweet data collected included tweets from the ENGO. The data in this study were obtained by using web crawling Twitter API application and Python Tweepy library that automatically searched for predefined tweets and time period. Before the process begun, the system checked the consumer key and access token to retrieve data from Twitter since the token data had been registered. The system then stored the tweets in the MySQL database, which was then stored in the csv format to ease interpretation. This stage resulted in 2834 tweets collected from January 1st through December 31st, 2019.

Content analysis

Once the tweets were collected, a content analysis of the tweets was conducted. The content analysis in this research was carried out through three stages. First, reading each tweet to identify the information published by each ENGO to its followers. This study did not use categories that guided the content of the analysis. Instead, content analysis was based on data. This was because of efforts to reduce the subjectivity of the results of the content analysis (Lewis, Zamith, and Hermida,

2013). Subsequently, the second and third authors tried to verify the findings from the initial coding by doing the same thing. The discussion between the three authors about the different coding produced new codes that formed a series of codes that contained the type of content shared by ENGO. Finally, code verification was carried out by an author who is not affiliated with this paper. During the final stage, the second author examined and agreed with the type of content (Bellström, Magnusson, Pettersson, & Sören, 2016). There are two strategies in analyzing social media content. First, based on categories that have been developed during previous research and the second is content analysis (Krippendorff, 2013). Based on a review of literature, the authors found no previous research that attempted to analyze the content of ENGO activity on social media. To that end, authors chose to use the second strategy.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

WALHI, Greenpeace Indonesia and their presences on digital platforms

Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia, commonly called WALHI, is an independent and non-profit environmental organization. At present, it has spread its ideals to almost all areas of Indonesia by being present in various provinces in Indonesia. Its main objective is to oversee the current development by promoting solutions

to create a sustainable environment and uphold social justice. Its vision is the realization of a fair and democratic social, economic, and political order that can guarantee the people’s rights to a good source of life, and the environment.

WALHI utilizes social media for various purposes to achieve its goals as set out in the organization’s vision, strategic plan, and organizational goals. It is present in various types of social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Table 1 shows the profile of WALHI on each of its social media.

Table 1 shows that WALHI is present in every popular social media today. Twitter became the social media that had the most followers, having 144,125 followers. Subsequently, WALHI’s Facebook was followed by 64,531 Facebook users. Following this, WALHI’s Instagram, which has distributed 1,096 posts and followed by 26,833. Finally, the WALHI YouTube account has uploaded 183 videos and has 1,567 subscribers.

Greenpeace is one of the ENGOS present in Indonesia because the world's

fragile ecosystems require voices, answers, and action. Greenpeace's long history dates all the way back to 12 activists who boarded a ship called the Phyllis Cormack in Vancouver, Canada to protest the United States' nuclear bomb test in Alaska. Greenpeace is guided by four fundamental values: nonviolent and personally accountable action, independence, the absence of permanent opponents or allies, and the promotion of solutions.

The first value, nonviolent action and personal accountability, implies that Greenpeace acts with full awareness and personal accountability and is committed to peace, as evidenced by the fact that all Greenpeace activists who participate in action get training in peaceful action. The second value is independence, which means that Greenpeace will never accept funding from any government, company, or political party, as individual donations are the lifeblood of Greenpeace's mission. Greenpeace's third value emphasizes the need of having neither permanent opponents nor permanent allies. This is because Greenpeace believes that if a government or business is

Table 1. Adoption of Social Media by WALHI

Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	YouTube
<u>Likes: 64,378</u>	<u>Tweets: 34,368</u>	<u>Posts: 1,096</u>	<u>Videos: 183</u>
<u>Follows: 64,531</u>	<u>Followings: 244</u>	<u>Followers: 26,833</u>	<u>Subscribers: 1,567</u>
	<u>Followers: 144,125</u>	<u>Followings: 75</u>	

Source: WALHI’s Social Media, 2019

committed to bringing about positive change, Greenpeace will work to ensure it occurs. The latter aim is to advocate for solutions in areas where Greenpeace feels that pressure alone is insufficient, by developing, conducting research, and advocating for tangible actions toward a green and peaceful future for people.

Greenpeace Indonesia maintains an active social media presence on platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Greenpeace Indonesia has accumulated 961,339 followers on Twitter after sharing 27.4K tweets. Instagram is the second most popular social media platform, with 521K followers, and Greenpeace Indonesia has uploaded 2,460 photographs and videos on the platform. 427 videos with 58,900 subscribers have been shared on Youtube. Meanwhile, Greenpeace Indonesia's Facebook page has amassed an impressive 806 260 followers

Use of social media by ENGO

This research explores the presence of ENGOs on social media, especially to understand information created to encourage better environmental governance. The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Article 28 H paragraph (1) clearly states “the right to a good and healthy environment for all its citizens”. This right also includes the right to participate in efforts to create a sustainable, good and healthy environment. The right to education about the environment,

access to information, access to participation, and access to justice are guaranteed in Law 32/2009 Article 65 paragraph (2). The four rights are the government's obligation to provide and guarantee its sustainability. The channels for guaranteeing and fulfilling rights in the digital era by the government to their citizens are often unable to meet the expectations and needs of the problems that occur. The role of environmental organizations is significant as a catalyst for social movements to obtain information and participate in environmental management, apart from having a strong legal standing (Article 92 paragraph (1) of Law 32/2009), it also has flexibility in capturing and distributing information from the public.

Specifically, we conducted a content analysis of WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia's tweets to determine whether they received the benefits of social media in environmental communication. Moreover, it also sought out to determine whether WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia make the best use of social media features to encourage broader public involvement in environmental issues. Table 2 presents the types of information produced by WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia. In general, we found nine categories. The types of information shared, include building awareness, promoting events, and criticizing the government. Meanwhile, the category of

Table 2. Adoption of Social Media by Greenpeace Indonesia

Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	YouTube
Likes: 805, 996	Tweets: 27.4K	Posts: 2,460	Videos: 427
Follows:806, 260	Followings: 1,170	Followers: 521K	Subscribers: 58,900
	Followers: 961,339	Followings: 235	

Source: Greenpeace Indonesia's Social Media, 2019

giving advice, informing past events, and open donation activities are rarely found.

Of the nine categories, WALHI uses Twitter mostly to build public awareness of environmental problems. This type was found in 34% for WALHI and 43% for Greenpeace Indonesia of all tweets that were successfully retrieved. In this category, WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia try to educate the public about the challenges faced by Indonesia today. In more detail, WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia present a critical analysis of the causes and effects of the problem, especially by highlighting the reasons for the absence of the government or the government's lack of making the policies properly.

The next category is marketing the activities they convene or conduct. This category includes various kinds of tweets to invite the public to an event, usually in the form of a discussion. By considering the characteristics of social media that can reach more people, WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia use a variety of strategies to promote its activities. It ranges from using only words and hashtags to implementing infographics. This category was found to be

present quite frequently on the WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia profile page, calculated as much as 17% and 25% respectively.

The next is the use of social media to criticize the government. WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia also use social media to express its criticism of the government, especially when the government applies the wrong policy or is not present on public issue that deserve attention. Besides, WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia also use Twitter as a medium to voice allegations of corrupt practices. It is especially in terms of business licensing where a permit should not be issued because it violates one or several rules. Tweets in this category were found to be 14% and 5%. Twitter is also used by WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia to mobilize the masses, accounting for 12% and 5%. In this case, They invite the public to jointly go down the road to encourage the government to create better environmental management. Furthermore, it also encourages online protests, which are then followed by offline ones.

Statement of stance category presents the tweets that show WALHI and

Table 3. Categories of Information Produced by WALHI dan Greenpeace Indonesia

Category	WALHI	Greenpeace Indonesia
Building Awareness	34%	43%
Promoting Event	17%	25%
Criticizing The Government	14%	5%
Mass Mobilization	12%	5%
Statement Of Stance	11%	2%
Going Live	8%	18%
Giving Advice	3%	12%
Informing Past Event	2%	15%
Open Donation	1%	2%

Source: processed by author, 2020

Greenpeace Indonesia's attitude towards government policies. It accounted for 11% and 2% of the total tweets that were collected. Most of the tweets in this category are about WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia's statements that disagree with the government. They then held a press conference that condemned the government to immediately revoke specific policies because they endangered the environment and society.

A critical feature of social media is the live feature. This feature allows users to see a video shot directly by the account owner without having to be on the site. This category is called going live, which shows the use of live features by WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia, especially in organizing discussions. This category found as much as 8% and 18% of the total tweets. Through this category, the followers can discuss matters in real time, even though they

are in different locations. Three last categories are giving advice (3% and 12%), informing past activities (2% and 15%), and collecting donations (1% and 2%). The category of giving advice contains specific actions that the government must take as soon as possible. Social media is also used by WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia to inform past activities. Finally, there is an invitation to open donations to finance certain activities

The issues tweeted

In addition to the tweet category, we also collected any environmental cases discussed through Twitter, as shown in Table 3. Most examples are the construction of public infrastructures, such as toll roads and power plants, that harm the environment and the people living near the construction site. Also, the process of land conversion that is deemed unfair. Following this is the issue of forestry, mainly related to forest conversion. The agrarian category contains land conflicts,

mainly between companies and communities. Violence against environmental activists that is still happening is also voiced by WALHI and Greenpeace Indonesia through their social media. Afterward is the mining category that contains mining cases, especially coal.

Environmental cases discussed further are water and air pollution, peatland fires, plantations, waste, land ownership, and licensing and investment. In the category of water and air pollution, They voiced about the condition of air and water in Indonesia in several polluted areas. Peatlands, especially in the dry season, become a hot topic, especially related to peat fires that cause smoke. Plantations, especially oil palm plantations, which often cause social conflicts, are also discussed. Issues that are rarely discussed include waste issues, land ownership, and licensing and investment.

Discussion

Social media can expand communication channels with the outside world, which in turn can lead to the discovery of new and more effective ways to participate in the political process (Hemmi & Crowther, 2013; Stewart & Schultze, 2019). The findings in this study support this by showing that ENGO uses social media primarily to build public awareness of environmental issues. ENGO, through its Twitter account, provides an understanding of the public about the causes and consequences of a case of confusion and the role of governments that are not present or protect corporate interests.

This research collaborates the statement that for ENGOs, information and communication technology can encourage more extensive public participation found only through emails and websites in previous studies (Kurniawan & Rye, 2014; Polat,

Table 4. Issues Discussed on Social Media

Category	WALHI	Greenpeace Indonesia
<u>Public Infrastructure Development</u>	34%	26%
<u>Forestry</u>	19%	21%
<u>Agrarian</u>	11%	15%
<u>Violence Against Environmental Activists</u>	6%	3%
<u>Mining</u>	6%	3%
<u>Air And Water Pollution</u>	5%	20%
<u>Peatland</u>	5%	3%
<u>Plantation</u>	4%	3%
<u>Waste</u>	4%	2%
<u>Land Ownership</u>	3%	2%
<u>Licensing And Investment</u>	3%	2%

Source: processed by author, 2020

2005). It found that social media characteristics can convey information and coordinate activities. Initially, ENGO only used websites and emails, which had various limitations (Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015). Massive adoption of social media by both the public and organizations allows ENGO to be free from dependence on the news media. Moreover, they can provide platforms independently to mobilize active support and involvement of the community. Society not only plays a passive role; it can also generalize information to gain complete knowledge of an environment.

Communication on social media can involve several types of social coordination, which then encourage negotiations, standardization, and adjust government policies (Castells, 2015). However, this research found no evidence of this. Social media for WALHI was to build public awareness of the environment, including government mistakes in making policies. Despite that, social media plays an important role in strengthening the work of organizations, such as by sharing various kinds of promotion for WALHI activities. Therefore, this research is in line with the finding that social media, in some cases, is also used to coordinate activities by mobilizing the public in discussion and campaign activities (Hermida & Hernández-Santaolalla, 2018; Milan, 2015).

This research also found that ENGO has created a public sphere for participation and exchange of ideas. For ENGO, social media is an alternative arena to present the public sphere to discuss various environmental issues. It is an alternative communication medium for political deliberations on environmental issues. It encourages activists to express their ideas and attract broader public support (Kurniawan & Rye, 2014; Ross & Bürger, 2014). This research discovered that ENGO use social media to increase public awareness about environmental issues, especially regarding government actions through various policy instruments that are often not in favor of the environment and the public.

Although ENGO actively uses its social media to voice environmental problems, online activism may be cut off from the reality of environmental policy. It is because online activism is entirely dependent on offline ones (Hermida & Hernández-Santaolalla, 2018; Kurniawan & Rye, 2014). ENGO uses its social media to mobilize the public to protest both in a case or the accumulation of the government's absence in a case and the government's favoring of the corporation.

This study demonstrates that ENGO in Indonesia uses social media as an essential tool to meet various objectives in online activism. ENGO uses its social media to break through geographical boundaries by

using live features. Therefore, people who cannot attend a discussion can still contribute actively (Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015; Milan, 2015). Furthermore, to invite broader public involvement, ENGO uses social media for marketing its activities by sending tweets containing invitations to participate.

Traditionally-conducted campaigns to raise public awareness of an environmental issue rely on the news media to put an issue on the policy agenda and to mobilize the wider public. Meanwhile, internal public involvement is limited to passive public opinion and fundraising dana (Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, 2015). That said, in line with the findings of Katz-Kimchi & Manosevitch, (2015) as seen from ENGOs' customary way of sharing online news links, ENGO might still view mainstream media as relevant to attract public and government attention (Gritten & Kant, 2007; Jolley & Rickards, 2020; Xu & Zhang, 2020). The presence of ENGO in public indicates that the public is an active group. They can be driven by specific communications that are generated in their consciousness (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012).

In the era of social media, environmental activism and cyber-advocacy have become a lot easier. Social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, have been utilized by environmental activists in Indonesia to spread information about environmental issues not only to their spheres

of influence but also to a much wider audience (Zhang & Skoric, 2019). We found that Indonesian ENGOs like Walhi and Greenpeace Indonesia have strong presence on Social Media by publishing environmental-related news items, opinion articles and commentary notes on their account. They also run campaigns to raise awareness about environmental issues such as fundraising campaigns, petitions, voting polls and mobile calling applications.

Another thing that ENGO has been doing is creating a digital public sphere by using social media. They do this because ENGO believes that digital communication is playing an important role in providing information about environment issues. It also empowers citizens to be more open in communicating about environment issues and in influencing the actions of the government (Han, 2014; Zhang & Skoric, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the use of social media by ENGOs, especially to determine whether or not social media can be a viable alternative to changing public view and perception e about environmental issues. The results showed that for ENGOs, the role social media plays is more than what has been documented in previous research as a medium for disseminating information to the public about environmental issues. This

research also found that the public can be a group that participates in providing information to obtain a complete picture of a particular environmental issue. Social media helps to break through the conventional boundaries thereby enabling the public to participate in activities without their being physically present. That said, although social media is an alternative channel to communicate stances and ideals, ENGOs still rely on the mainstream media to reach a wider public, primarily because of the digital divide which inhibits some people from participating.

This research utilized a content analysis method that captures the information shared by ENGOs to communicate their idealism. In the future, to gain a complete picture, an interview with an ENGO should be conducted. In addition, this research only focused on Twitter, primarily to see how an ENGO builds dialogical communication with the public. Future research should look at other social media to obtain different kinds of social media characteristics and their impact on the public. Finally, research need to be conducted on assessing public reaction to an online campaign conducted by ENGOs, especially to explore whether or not social media is able to shift public belief and perception to empathize with a certain cause.

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