The Role of Female Activists in Establishing the Discourse of Anti-Hoax Movement as A Peace Movement

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Abstract. The development of information and communication technology has changed the approaches in performing a social movement. Technology has facilitated the activists to communicate and develop the strategy in conducting campaign on the internet especially on social media. As one of the social movements initiated through the social media, anti-hoax movement gains numerous responses from netizen. Anti-hoax movement is the resistance towards the spread of hoax in social media in which women were highly involved in it. This writing was aimed to describe the background diversity of female social activists and their involvement in fighting hoaxes in social media. The method used in this research was virtual study by performing participatory observation on several accounts of female activists who active in anti-hoax movement, conducting survey on 30 female activists, and online interview to 11 of them. The research findings have indicated that the social background female activists were varied and not only came from a certain social class. Anti-hoax female activists conduct the action through campaign, writing, and reviewing hoaxes, and sharing the fact checking results. This research provides the description regarding the role of female activists in establishing anti-hoax movement as a peace movement and managing the movement in social media through positive and constructive manners.

Keywords: female activist, anti-hoax movement, social media, social movement.

1 Introduction

Women in the context of social movement is frequently related to gender-based social issues which become its driving force. Violence, stereotype, subordination, marginalization, domination, and various other dictions that indicate that gender-based issues are still the discourse which becomes the concern of female activists. However, in the reality, there are women who also actively speak out in fighting various social issues. Their roles are facilitated by the technology through the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) that allows women to take extensive parts. The utilization of ICT encourages the exchange of knowledge and social interaction for not only towards women and their networks. This technology innovation works in collective manner, in a real-time, and complicatedly blocking. In this context, the utilization of ICT is able to support the social movement to transfer the authority from state to civil society [1].

The strong role of ICT utilization for social change is not only limited to political rebellion but has expanded to the field gender and development study with many experts

associated the utilization of ICT to achieved empowerment and emancipation of women [2, 3]. One of them is the role of women in anti-hoax movement. A movement used to fight fake information and news in social media, especially Facebook.

Hoax is the lie which directed in such a way to enter and function in the mind of society [4]. The rumor which not originated from certain news article, false statement by politicians, and misleading report or information [5]. Hoax is the entire false information spread intentionally or unintentionally with misleading purpose. The phenomenon of hoax spreading has been quite troubling and feared by many people might cause polarization and conflict amidst the community [6]. The massive distribution of hoax occurs in social media, therefore, the resistance towards hoaxes also massively conducted in social media. Anti-hoax movement is a social movement which occurs as a response to the movement of hoax distribution that emerges due to polarization of ideology and politic after the president election in 2014. The phenomenon of hoax distribution has attracted numerous interest of women to take part in the action of fighting hoaxes.

2 Female activists in Social Movement in Social Media

Social media creates various forms of public space which not only involved bourgeois circle alone but also from various classes exist in the community. This phenomenon is the inevitable effect as a result of characteristics of social media, namely facilitate people to have interaction, to share, to create, and to consume online content [7]. Those characteristics that make the social media to become effective media in social movements especially in establishing network and conducting mobilization.

2.1. The utilization of social media for social movement

Collectively, social media is an online technology that facilitates the interaction and builds communities [8], therefore, social media becomes the productive spot to give birth to various movements for social transformation. The social media users in Egypt and Tunisia argue that Facebook has been used particularly to improve the awareness of the community in the states regarding the running civil movement, spreading information to the world regarding the movement and managing the activities and actions [9].

A movement generally requires space to perform street demonstration, however, the network technology has provided free room and space in the internet [10]. The existence of internet and social media is contributing beyond geographic boundary and socio-economy disparity as well as facilitates the establishment of national collective identity and wider support towards movement [11]. Internet and social media used by social movement as the media to mobilize, motivate others to be involved in the action, and to provide information regarding action [12].

Information and communication technology especially social media could be used as media to collect and empower the people in the network [13], which involved in a movement as an instrument in awareness improvement in environmental conservation [14, 15], propaganda to strengthen the identity in radicalism movement [16], campaign of public support in the case of Sutinah [17], until it used as the mobilization media of movement in resisting the government and reviving the democracy [18, 11, 19, 20]. Social media is used

from the grass-root movement to global movement activity. It used in various ways, to spread information, mobilization, campaign, propaganda, and protest.

2.2. The Movement of Female Activists in Social Media

Social media gives women the space to speak and heard. Starting from politicians and law makers to farmers and small-business owners, conversation in social media connects women in the entire world, thus, they able to support each other in encouraging transformations. Some experts even see ICT especially social media as the media for women empowerment because this media is more democratic in which every person especially women are able to articulate the concern in fighting discrimination, government and religious leaders. ICT also becomes a platform that used by women to practice the rights over freedom of expression in public discretion [2, 3].

Social media is used by the women movement and the women who contribute in the pro-democracy movement in Middle East through the application of ICT especially cellular and satellite. This media offers massive potential to bring forward the feminine agenda which able to spread and create new discretions, connect different and varied group as well as allowing the new and creative form of activism protest [21]. As an example, female activists can contribute as citizen journalist by writing in social media and blog to change how the problems are framed as well as changing the structure of political opportunity [22] [23]. In addition, women also spread information and educate public through internet [24], and distribute awareness and information as well as mobilize the constituent [23]. The impact and benefit of the role of women as social media activist are hinting non-violence movement, social transformation through peaceful approaches, become media activist, weaken the power of communication and control of state in the movement against authoritarian government in Middle East [22].

3 Data and Method

This research was conducted with a qualitative approach through virtual study. Random survey was performed until 30 anti-hoax female activists in social media were acquired, either who join a certain community of the ones who conduct individual anti-hoax campaign activities. The survey was conducted to acquire information regarding the description of social background, motivation, and social media platform used in anti-hoax movement activities.

From the 30 activists, 11 anti-hoax female activists were willing to be interviewed to obtain more information regarding the ways of using social media in anti-hoax movement and the description of their activities as anti-hoax movement activists. In addition, 11 social media accounts were willing to be studied for the research. I then participate in some of their posts in social media especially on Facebook as an observer between 23 February 2018 and 1 September 2018. This activity provides background to analyze the strategy in fighting hoax in social media through their posts. This analysis was performed by clarifying their posts regarding hoaxes and reflecting the messages on the posts.

4 Female Activists in Anti-Hoax Movement in Social Media

4.1. The Movement of Female Activists in Social Media

In anti-hoax movement which male and female activists are cooperating to each other, the social background of female activists involved in it is varied as seen on Table 1. They consist of female with varied profession, and different levels of education. In general, they got involved because the content of hoax that spread becomes the problem which related closely to their social life. This condition indicates that anti-hoax movement has shown the characteristics of new social movement. In new social movement, the actors fight across social barriers for the sake of humanity [25].

Table 1. Social Background of Anti-hoax Female Activists

Job	Age			Education		
	% job	% age < 35 years old	% age ≥ 35 years old	% education level High School/ Vocational School	% education level Bachelor Degree	% education level Master/Doctor
Housewife	16.67	3.333	13.33	3.33	13.33	0.00
Employee	20.00	3.333	16.67	6.67	13.33	0.00
Civil apparatus	10.00	3.333	6.67	0.00	3.33	6.67
Lecturer	10.00	0.000	10.00	0.00	0.00	10.00
Retired	3.33	0.000	3.33	0.00	3.33	0.00
Community activists	6.67	3.333	3.33	0.00	3.33	3.33
Female workers	10.00	3.333	6.67	10.00	0.00	0.00
Entrepreneur	13.33	0.000	13.33	3.33	6.67	3.33
Journalist	10.00	3.333	6.67	0.00	6.67	3.33
	100.00	20.000	80.00	23.33	50.00	26.67

This diversity of social background also indicates that the hoax issue is the problem that commonly occurs in the community, not only exposing the specific social class. The female activists are moving in the social media network to fight hoaxes. The abilities to identify hoaxes, conduct digital literacy, and using social media properly are not influenced by education level. This condition is influenced by the ability in using search engine [26]. Some activists have followed the training conducted by Google Labs and *Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia* (*Mafindo*).

Table 1 shows that the 80% of women who involved in anti-hoax movement are above 35 years old. Their involvement is more encouraged by the concern on the reality that there is a tendency in which women are having more frequent access and receiving various information in social media but do not own sufficient skill in performing the fact checking, therefore women are vulnerable to be exposed by hoaxes during the interaction in social media. In addition, it has been found that the consumed hoaxes are mostly acquired from the followed

What's App Group and Facebook groups. About 20% of female activists which aged under 35 years old have stated that they involved in anti-hoax movement due to the concern in which the family, friends, and environment have already exposed by hoaxes. Even social media especially Facebook has become the media that easy for hoax spreading, incitement and provocation as well as hate speech.

In general, the activists perceive that hoaxes have exposed most of the young generation because teenagers as the segment which has most interaction in social media. The awareness that the spreading of hoax could cause insecurity, anxiety, decrease of young generation quality and community life quality, disunion, causing hate and disunity amidst the community which at the end generate nation disintegration and conflict has encouraged women to become anti-hoax activists.

4.2. The Effort of Female Activists in Social Media in Fighting Hoaxes

The women who got involved in anti-hoax movement are generally having collective activity but there are some who work individually, however, in social media, those activists conduct activities of fighting hoaxes individually. The account in the internet can be used by activists to conduct personal actions [12]. This effort is effective to manifest awareness and influencing the friendship circle.

The female activists in anti-hoax movement have known each other because they are connected through friendship or in the same member of anti-hoax community in social media. Social media could become the driving structure that encourages the involvement of citizens. [18]. Some of these female activists are the member of *Forum Anti Fitnah Hasut dan Hoax* (FAFHH), some of them also follow the Fan Page of *Mafindo* and Indonesian Hoaxes, even some have put an initiative to form *Masyarakat Peduli Literasi Digital* (*Sapu Lidi*) to be able of developing digital literacy among the community. Some are decided to move individually.

There are four platforms of social media which frequently used by anti-hoax activists to perform actions, namely Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and What's App. Facebook is a popular platform and selected by many people because it contains a lot of character, easy to send videos, pictures and images, easy to manage who have access and easy to share towards the same Facebook users and the other social media. In addition, according to the activists, hoaxes are more spread through Facebook. The utilization of What's App in the activity of fighting hoaxes are conducted because hoaxes have been spreading easily in What's App Group but difficult to be denied. The twelve activists who used this media are the group admins in What's App Group. Two other activists who use Instagram have confessed that they already accustomed in using the platform, while twitter is not the social media platform favored by the anti-hoax female activists because besides limited number of character, the reaction of citizen also very hard to be controlled. On twitter, in their opinions, constructive discussion regarding the issues related to hoaxes cannot be established.

The progress of anti-hoax female activists in social media was performed through three strategies, namely (1) conducting campaign in social media, (2) educating through writing, and (3) spreading debunking hoax in the form of fact checking associated with specific hoaxes. The campaign strategy in social media is conducted by posting the pictures of anti-hoax activities which performed offline in various regions and posting the poster of campaign activity against hoaxes by providing interesting caption. Education strategy is conducted by writing in social media. Invitation to stop spreading hoax in social media. Providing information regarding the danger of hoaxes by selecting the right dictions to fight hoaxes. This selection of dictions is meant to establish positive issue in fighting hoaxes and counter of

discourse in constructive manner. This activity is conducted to avoid hate speech in fighting hoaxes.

The next strategy is debunking hoaxes and fact checking activity. This strategy can be used through three methods, namely (a) distributing the results of fact checking from FAFHH, a division of fact checking of Mafindo in Facebook, this forum is quite popular and acknowledged by Facebook and Google as the organization of fact checking partner in Indonesia, (b) conducting individual fact checking by searching through the information and relying on the source of citation from the trusted sites as the valid source of information, (c) using the application of Hoax Buster Tools as an application to check fact through smartphone. This far, this strategy is effective to introduce the anti-hoax movement on citizens.

The involvement of women activists in anti-hoax movement in social media has provided more conducive climate. In conducting campaigns and education through writing, women are able to frame the perspective against hoaxes as a creative and educative action by socializing the activity of fighting hoaxes as fun and entertaining activities. Writing through the selection of dictions and non-frontal and unprovocative words to fight hoaxes. This effort is meant for the anti-hoax discourse to free from hate speech. Female activists help building positive and creative narration to fight hoaxes in social media.

5 Conclusion

The women who involved in anti-hoax movement have crossed the social boundaries and classes based on the altruism spirit which in conducting the activity, they move the resistance sincerely to manifest the main purpose of the movement, namely a change to the way of behaving in responding to various issues and information spread in social media. The progress is embodied through anti-hoax campaign, writing, and inviting people to stop spreading hoaxes as well as conducting counter hoaxes. By being active in social media, anti-hoax female activists frame the anti-hoax movement as a peace movement. This effort could become an example of a counter social movement which fights through constructive approaches.

Acknowledgement

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