

The Role of Social Media in Shaping the Animal Protection Movement in Indonesia

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Abstract

In the past decade, the number of community-based animal protection movements has shown a significant increase in Indonesia. These groups are actively fighting for animal rights, protection, and conservation while continuing to expand the influence and attract new members through various channels, especially social media. This article seeks to see the contribution of the social media strategy used by animal rights groups to the three basic elements of a social movement: collective identity, actual mobilization, and network organization. How social media, especially Facebook and Instagram, are used by animal rights groups to achieve their ultimate goal as a social movement. This analysis also seeks to map the character of the movement for animal protection in Indonesia in the realm of new media based on their ideology, strategies, and objectives they want to achieve.

Keyword: Animal protection movement; social media; social movement

Introduction

Although the animal protection movement is often associated with Peter Singer's utilitarian work published in 1975 entitled *Animal Liberation*, efforts to encourage policies to reduce torture and exploitation of animals have long begun in the early 19th century. Animal protection movement coincided with the momentum of public awareness about human rights and humanitarian law, anti-slavery, and woman suffrage. In 1822 the first anti-cruelty law in animals was ratified in the United Kingdom, starting the first political foundation for animal protection and marking the initial victory of an advocacy movement carried out by observers of animal life (Becker, 2012). This law was later supported by the establishment of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) organization in 1834. SPCA presence then began to spread to the United States in 1860 in line with rising abolitionist ideas (anti slavery) and the protection of human rights. The SPCA branch then expanded to various regions such as Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and San Francisco, where these organizations not only sought to encourage the enforcement of anti-torture laws, but also established animal shelter for wasted animals and victims of torture. The big leap in the animal protection movement in the US began in 1877 with the establishment of the American Humane Association (AHA), an advocacy organization for the protection of children and animals.

It should be understood that from the outset the animal protection movement never had one specific and specific struggle idea. The ideas and identities of these movements have developed in line with socio-cultural changes in society. Generation animal protection movement marked the beginning of a political effort to encourage the government issued a policy to remove various forms of torture on animals, such as bullfighting and dog (*bull-baiting*) and protecting large-sized animals such as cows and horses from torture practices at the farm. In the early twentieth century, the ideas brought by the animal protection movement began to experience a shift in focus. The Humane Movement, for example, began to focus on the condition of dogs and cats in urban areas along with changes in people's lifestyles. Technological developments in the field of transport make use of the horse as an animal transport on the wane while improving standards of living make the amount he was allowed to rise. Pet ownership numbers skyrocketed in the post-World War II era, where the concentration of

war veterans and the genera of the elderly who lived independently as well living on the edge of the city ballooned rapidly . The development of technology in the field of medicine also broadens the scope of issues that concern the animal protection movement. The opposition movement to fight the use of animals in a variety of medical laboratory research began to emerge in America with the establishment of the American Anti-Vivisection Society. Other organizations such as the Audubon Society for example, prefer to focusing on efforts to conserve wild animals.

The 1970s marked the beginning of the new animal Protection Movement. Unlike the previous pattern of movement, the movement of animal protection in this era was based on increasing emotional sentiment in animals. Philosophers such as Peter Singer and Tom Regan began to form a philosophical foundation that explained the relationship between humans and animals . Singer then spearheaded the rights movement animals after popularizing the concept of "speciesism " (parallel to racism and sexism) while Regan emphasized the importance of respecting basic rights of animals . But the most dominant influences came from the human rights movement and women liberation. The appreciation of animal rights can easily be analogous to the rights of minorities and oppressed people. This tradition continues to this day where almost 75% of the total membership of the activists of Bina Tang protection are women , accompanied by the use of language and strategies similar to the women's rights movement. The animal protection movement has also begun to use confrontational tactics such as splashing red paint on wearers of animal fur jackets, disrupting biomedical research conferences, and infiltrating research laboratories to free animals that are subject to tests. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) formed in 1980 became one of the most recognized militant animal protection organizations.

Along with the various developments in the animal protection movement, a big leap in digital communication is also happening, one of which is marked by the emergence of various platforms social media on the internet. The discussion about internet-based activism itself actually began in the 1990s, including how this new media can be used effectively to support various social and political movements (Best and Kellner, 2001; Couldry and Curran, 2003). Social media is considered capable of being present as a support tool for collective actions because of its ability to change communication patterns to be more dense, complex, and interactive. Masha r AKAT be more exposed to a variety of access to information and more opportunities to engage in public discussion which in turn increases the ability to realize a collective action (Shirky, 2011). Social media removes the socio-cultural boundaries and demographic hierarchies , such as economic and age levels, thus ensuring a broader and more free interactivity for all societies.

In the context of social movements, social media has the speed, scope, and interactivity that traditional forms of media do not have that were previously popularly used by activists and organizations, such as leaflets, posters and faxes (Eltantawy & Wist, 2011). Messages written on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram can reach millions of audiences are almost instantaneous, as if removing physical geographical and time boundaries. The increasing speed of information dissemination encourages the process of validation, mobilization and expansion of the scope of a social movement (Lopez, 2014). But the most important elements of communication owned social media is its ability to bypass official sources and the media as a whole, as well as provide an opportunity for ordinary citizens to change the political landscape in which he lived (Clark, 2012). Social media also creates channels for individuals to interact globally. Facebook and Twitter act as a relay to convey local issues to a global audience. This means that the global audience can have the opportunity to advocate for various issues that are outside their locality (Tweneboah, 2015). Furthermore, Bimber (1998) states that the position of social media becomes increasingly important in groups that are outside the boundaries of public institutions and traditional political organizations. This new citizen-based movement does not have official support, both financial and legitimate. Therefore, they will rely heavily on the ability of social media to be able to organize and memob i zation of his supporters.

The role of social media in mobilizing resources and framing issues in social movements has been recognized by many researchers sebe l umnya. However, some researchers expressed skepticism about the effects of social media on social movements. According to Mc Adam et al (1996), in the case of social movements that existed before the era of int e rnet, increasing capacity Internet communications generated by no means can replace interpersonal networks that have been built with previous strong. Malcolm Gladwell (2010) states that social movements need strong ties to be able to realize risky actions, such as demonstrations and boycotts. Social media on the other hand is considered to only be able to create weak ties and doubtful ability to be able to create emotions and real enthusiasm (Van de Donk and Foederer, 2001; Etzioni and Etzioni, 1999).

Social media also seems to have a major influence on the struggle for the animal protection movement. This is shown by the emergence of the official account animal protection movement in a variety of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter is accompanied by a series of campaign tactics that run through this new media platform. Some of the most popular animal protection organizations such as HSUS and PETA wrote an average of 14 posts in one week on Facebook and 134 times on Twitter, while approximately 18,967 people on Facebook and 1,695 people on Twitter discussed various issues regarding these organizations every week. The themes related to animal protection organizations are one of the most talked about social media users. (Switzer, 2011). These organizations have professional social media staff who are responsible for planning, running campaigns, and monitoring various activities on social media . That situation

COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

Collective identity is the core of the formation of a collective movement. In the absence of a collective framework or 'series of meanings and definitions carried by a group of individuals in certain situations', the possibility of forming a collective identity that manifests itself in real action is very small (McAdam et al, 1996). Identity in this paper is interpreted as frame of references from each organization and animal protection movement. The use of frame analysis was first introduced by Irving Goffan (1986) which was later developed in the context of social movements by Snow et al (1986). In this paper, I will focus on two main framing elements, namely diagnostic framing and prognostic framing. Diagnostic framing tries to see how organizations identify problems and their causes, while prognostic framing tries to see how the problem solving plan is developed through various strategies (Grehard and Ruchts, 1992). For this reason, we are trying to see how each animal protection movement defines animal protection efforts and how they are trying to achieve their goals.

Based on the frame analysis framework described earlier, the animal protection movement is clearly not a movement that has uniform goals and tactics. Lyle Munro (2005) identified three major groups in the animal protection movement. The first group is the animal welfare movement, led by anti-violence organizations of classical animals such as ASPCA and HSUS. Animal welfare sees problems regarding animals as a political issue and seeks to improve the treatment of livestock and pets through changes in laws and policies. The second group is Animal rights movement. The group sees animal issues as a moral and philosophical issue. Social movements that hold this principle, such as the organization led by Tom Regan and Gary Francione, see animals as sentient beings who have rights that must be recognized and protected. The latest is the Animal Liberation Movement, which holds the pragmatic view of Peter Singer, who sees that the exploitation of animals is an endemic effect of capitalism. Each of these movements focuses on increasing human treatment of animals, but has a different foundation of beliefs and strategies from each other. The Animal Welfare Movement focuses more on conventional political advocacy efforts such as lobbying and petitions, both real and online to achieve broader and legally binding changes (Becker, 2015). Liberationist animals prefer tactical unconventional and disruptive ones such as civil disobedience, while animal rights groups use militant strategies such as hidden videos and infiltration into various farms that are considered to torture animals (Munro, 2012)

ACTUAL MOBILIZATION

The actual mobilization process, which means inviting participants to take to the streets and carrying out real actions such as protest and boycott, has always been the most difficult and unpredictable element in the success of social movements (Klandermans, 1984). Various methods are social movements to mobilize the masses, ranging from the mass media, direct mail, formal organization, until the unconventional ways like an underground newspaper. The change in the media landscape driven by ICT development means that the social movement has a wider opportunity to utilize a variety of new media to mobilize.

Various literatures try to explain how the mobilization method is carried out in social movements. According to Garret (2004), the role of ICT in the process of mobilizing social movements can be shared into three, namely the level of participation, contentious activity, and organizational issues. This paper will focus on elements at the level of participation, where the ability of social media to mobilize can be seen based on the ability of this media to engage more members and open opportunities for participation.

Based on an analysis of 15 social media accounts for the animal protection movement, it can be concluded that social media is present as an action mobilizer. The biggest role of social media in the mobilization process is its ability to reduce participation costs. Social media reduces the costs of coordination and communication, and provides an opportunity for anyone to join in social movements. Social media also shortens the distance between audiences and social movements, making the process of recruiting and accessing information easier. Social media also encourages feelings of having a collective identity which ultimately leads to the formation of a community. Social media creates a perception among individuals that they are part of a larger group that is united by the same issues and concerns. This same feeling is then reinforced by a strong communication system, thus creating a network that makes it possible for individuals to connect with each other. Both with those who have the same view or different.

Social media also makes it easier for participants to take the participation ladder process as stated by Clay Shirky (2011). Various forms of participation are not seen as separate processes that can be differentiated according to their effects and scope, but rather as a developing process. Starting from sharing to cooperation, then gradually increasing to collaboration and finally collective action. In various accounts of the animal protection movement, participants actively shared photos and opinions with each other on the issue of animal protection. The photos and opinions presented by the majority contained a more concrete call for action to ask for donations, support in online petitions, and calls for protest. Social media also opens opportunities for cooperative action, or the easiest to show by having conversations and discussions on a particular topic. The most recent form of participation, collective action, is the most difficult group effort to achieve and is central to the debate about the role of social media in supporting social movements. Collective action begins with a group of people who have a commitment to do certain businesses together, where decisions taken by the group will bind all group members. For a group to do collective action, the existing level of participation requirements must already be owned. Kelompok must have a vision and identity that is shared with the organizational structure and strong communication.

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Garret (2004) introduces the concept of microcontributions as a form of compromise on critics who doubt the role of social media in encouraging real collective action. Microcontribution refers to the form of contributions from members of the movement that are small, but in aggregate will form a bigger and more effective effect. Microcontributions provide opportunities for members to participate according to their abilities, which in the end will create a feeling of greater bonds to be involved again. The animal protection movement shows a good example of the principle of microcontributions. Support for online petitions initiated by the animal protection movement is an example of microcontributions .

The success achieved by the animal advocacy group in 1970-180a was a product of a coalition of various similar movements, not just the achievements of one organization. For example, 400 animal protection advocacy groups took a joint action to stop the Draize Irritation Test (this test blinded the eyes of rabbits who were the subject of the experiment) conducted by two leading cosmetic manufacturers, Avon and Revlon. The movement was led by Henry Spira, an experienced journalist and activist who also succeeded in holding a similar movement to stop the practice of the LD 50 Test (poison-based tests which almost always ended in the deaths of more than half of the animals that became guinea pigs).

Social media presents a new dilemma for the animal protection movement, where freedom to initiate personal activism results in a proliferation of movements that tend to be fragmented and individualistic.

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