



MANIFESTATION OF 'CLICK' ACTION TO POLITICAL ACTION: CIVIC PRACTICE IN SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE DYNAMIC OF DEMOCRACY IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The development of social media has created enthusiasm for democracy. The networked citizen-centered perspectives provide opportunities for the democratic innovations through self-actualized networking and interaction. To examine the implementation of social media in democracy, I offer a case study from Indonesia. The movement started from clicking the 'like' button of Facebook Group to support marginalized individual in the political arena then it evolved into provincial social activism. Next, this group decided to build a political party to support their main figure in the forecast Presidential candidacy. I will analyze the idea of citizenship, civic practice, and the Internet as democratic infrastructure. Finally, by using Breese's (2011) quadrant in public spheres continuum, I argue that the movements evolve from 'click' action to 'real' action and develop from civic sphere to the political sphere.

Keyword: public advocacy, social media, citizenship, social movement, democracy, civic practice, politics

The development of digital media has created optimistic argumentations about democratic participation. The arguments are: digital media enable the citizen to participate in campaigns while enjoying their private activity at their own home (Papacharissi, 2010), social media able to cut the 'transaction costs' for groups and activists organizing, mobilizing and contributing in collective action (Bonchek 1995; Naughton 2001). As a democratic infrastructure, the Internet opens networks to a various range of activists, groups, and social movements, to intertwine together and amalgamate in synchronized actions (Loader, 2011). Communication as a key to endure the interaction in social movements is assisted by the Internet's magnetism as an instrument to overcome the insufficient resources (van de Donk et al. 2004).

Indonesia is the circumstantial reference issue in this paper. Although, World Bank (2011) still implies that Indonesia is included as "Lower Middle Income Country" with a Gross National Income of \$ 2,500 per year, this economic circumstance did not encumber Indonesia from penetrating the social media. In 2011, the numbers of Facebook users in Indonesia have gone to the top two in the world behind the United States. There are nearly 16.68 (%) of Indonesia's total population are on Facebook (Socialbakers, 2011). Andy Zain the founders of MobileMonday Indonesia, a networking forum, in *The Economist* (Wilson, 2011) points out, "Everything is about friends and location," (p. 2) he also pointed out how people in Indonesia like publicity and do not worry about confidentiality and joyfully tail the trends. Thus, Indonesia can postulate a nation illustration exclusively on its responsive refinement to virtual socialization (Pringle, 2011).

The movements, as the major attention in this paper, commenced from clicking the 'like' button of a Facebook Group to back up an individual who is perceived by the members of a Facebook group as a excluded figure in the Indonesian political arena. It then established into provincial communal activism, which directed at engaging more people in political education primarily through Facebook. Next, this group of people decided to build a political party to support their foremost figure in the forecast Presidential candidacy in 2014. I contend that the movement involves citizens in interactive way, permit the progress of both self-actualized and dutiful citizenship, enlarge the crescendos of public spheres, and also endow the function of Facebook as communication infrastructure.

The agenda of this paper has three segments. First, I examine the idea of citizenship and how public advocacy to support marginalized group or individual become one of the citizen practice in democracy. Second, I review the digital media-based movement, especially connected with the positive and negative arguments on the Internet as democratic infrastructure. Third, I focus to the social movement in Indonesia by mapping the movements using Bresse's (2011) public spheres continuum and I discuss the dynamics of the movement with the concept of citizenship and media usage. Here, I argue that the movement, which evolved from 'click' action to 'political' action and developed from the civic sphere to the political sphere in context to a developing country (especially with its technological disparity), will face dynamics in the development of movements.

Public Advocacy as Civic Practice

The notion of citizenship concentrated in the participatory concept. Ward (2011) argues that the orthodox concept in citizenship frequently defines by joining in pre-existing democratic participation such as voting, assembling in political parties, denoting the community as leaders or legislator, and appearing civic deliberation. Bennett (2008) identified that participation by calling it DC or the dutiful citizen. Conversely, Bennett (2008) also proposed larger characterization of citizen due to the advancement of participation through digital media with self-actualization citizenship (AC). AC signifies to members of groups who generate individual engagement with peer networks, consolidate community action using technologies, and promote the manifestation of individual creation. While Ward (2011) identified AC as unconventional citizenship, it has more vibrant and prospect for emancipation.

There are numerous activities as civic practice. For example, Eliasoph (1996) argued that political conversation could be appreciated as a civic practice. Another example of civic practice is the public advocacy. Samuel (2007) argued that public advocacy is a "value-driven political process" (p. 616) because the publics raise questions upon inequality in power relations that they intend to change. In public advocacy, publics generally have positive perception on the issue, group, and individual they advocate. Thus, the publics recognize the existence of the domination to the marginalized groups of people or individuals. Samuel (2007) also identified that in public advocacy, public assembly happens because of the solidarity feeling and networking coalition. Therefore, public advocacy in various media for political purpose can be included as citizen engagement and civic practice in the spirit of democratic participation. The citizen participation can be supported from the communication media. One of the latest media development, which could be nominated as supporter of democratic participation is the social media. In this very case, I focus on the use of Facebook.

Social Media and Democracy

There are many affirmative argumentations to support the advantage of social media especially Facebook in democracy. McCombs (2004) argued that Facebook Groups could support the agenda setting of conventional media by providing similar topics and discourse. Conversely, Wooley (2010) argued that dominant discourse could be counter through Facebook. Thus Facebook can be the place for the counter public argumentation assembly. Tanis and Postmes (2003, see also Wooley et al, 2010) also mentioned that Facebook groups provide individuals spaces to produce alternative information about political issues or candidate. Gibson et al (2003) argued that social media could be informative, interactive, and open to any discussion. Norris (2003) mentioned it as 'interactive linkage between citizens and parties' (p. 23).



However, opposition arguments show a pessimistic tone in terms of democratic manipulation and even social media can be a 'counterproductive infrastructure' in democracy. Wooley et al (2010) argued that Internet communication technologies were subordinate to face-to-face communication because it limit people to communicate their non verbal message and other signals in habitual social context (look also Rice, 1993). Other disadvantages of Internet for example according to Coleman and Blumer (2009) are the potential of social media to be used as negative campaign to other candidate. Positive information about political figure could be easily disseminated as well as the negative information, fraud, and gossip. Other than that, candidate who can find supporter who master the digital media may create self-publication and create celebrity politics in digital media (Coleman&Blumer, 2009).

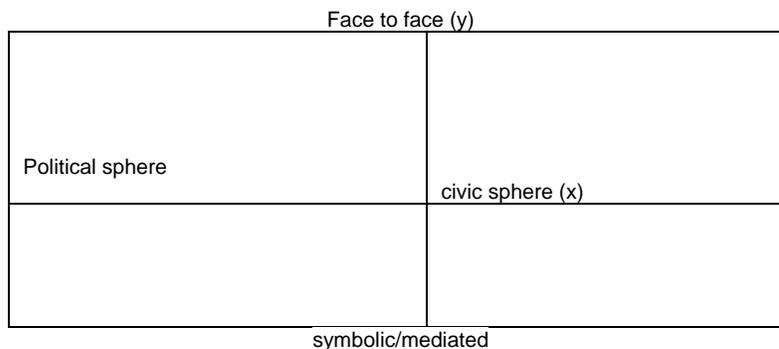
Facebook has the strength to easily gather people who have the same opinion or interest by collecting signature, virtual vote, or petition in a relatively short time. However, fast and instant virtual public collective action could not guarantee the long-term commitment or further actions. Meikle (2002) argued that people in governmental position or authority might disbelieve that those people who collectively click Facebook group or virtually sign petition would have the same commitment as the number of people who engage in old-fashioned political participation. Loader (2010) also tried to compare the level of commitment between "keyboard" activism and "real" activism. Obviously, keyboard activism is easier for individual as they can just click button and do it through their save and private area, such as home, bedroom, anywhere (Papacharissi, 2010), while "real" action require more effort such as attending the meetings or *rendezvous* in public area which sometime push people to leave their comfort and private zone. Kavanaugh et al (2005) also questioned the sustainability of the Facebook group by arguing that the Internet has a 'weak-tie instrument' even though they can be easily invited and gathered. In a popular term, digital bonding is 'easy come easy go', means that the public assembly in digital media for example Facebook Group cannot guarantee the same commitment with real action. Even more, because of the easy access to join, it is also offer easy access to leave the group. Earl and Shussman (2003) also pointed out that 'members' tend to be 'users', which means that individuals may leave the group once they can fulfill their needs or consume their interest through the group. They pointed out through their research that many individuals prefer to disengage permanently after the action they support virtually, chose to develop into the real action.

Mapping the Movement

I use the Breese (2011) map to comprehend the development of the movements through their different objection, mode of engagement, and media. Breese (2011) offered a system of mapping various public spheres and placed them along two axes, media and content. She argued Y-axis represent the use of media, which is from face to face interaction to mediated public sphere. Breese explained that public sphere might be happened through 'face to face' communication as it is mentioned in traditional view of public sphere by Habermas. While, due to the development of mediated communication and the acknowledgement of effectiveness in information dissemination through mass media, Breese stretched the Y to mediated communication pole. For horizontal line (x axis), she argued that the public spheres range from political (which go exceedingly to state sphere), to civic public spheres (which go exceedingly to the pole of the private sphere). This line is actually based on her assumption on the objective of public spheres. People might gather for the sake of political decision-making or political engagement such as participating in existing democratic system, representing people in house of representative, building political party, etc. Otherwise, public sphere will be aimed in civil purpose such as creating awareness in publics, supporting individuals, etc.

Breese (2011) argued that the benefit of mapping the public sphere is to help scholars to understand "the incarnation of movement in contemporary social world" (p. 133), means that the changing and dynamics of movements can be detect through the map. Using the mapping of the public sphere will help me to indicate "the interconnectedness, and the relevant divergences, of what have been considered distinct objects of study and forms of social interaction and action" (p. 133).

Graphic. 1.1. Breese Map on Public Spheres



Indonesian Social Movement Case: 'Click' Action to Political Action

Facebook Group "We Believe in the Integrity of Sri Mulyani Indrawati"

The Facebook Group started gaining support after the issue of Century Bank brought the name of Sri Mulyani Indrawati (currently works as Managing Director of World Bank in Washington D.C) in the House of Representative judgment in 2010. Sri Mulyani was the coordinator of the team to decide whether or not the government needed to give bail out to Century Bank. In 2009 when Sri Mulyani became the finance minister of Indonesia, the House of Representative start to question the decision of giving bail out to Century Bank. The members of the house questioned the legitimation, procedure, and system of bail out. In the television such as TV One and Metro TV, people could watch dozens of parliament members judged Sri Mulyani as the one who should be responsible for creating disadvantage to the country by giving bail out to bankrupt and corrupt bank for 731 million dollar US. Thus, during the process of interrogation of the member of house of representative, the Facebook supporters for Sri Mulyani started to appear. The supporters press the "like" button in the Facebook Group and give comment about the issue on the Facebook wall.



Public participation on the Facebook Group "We believe in the Integrity of Sri Mulyani Indrawati" reached over 131,000 members in only one month. This number of people is only 0.3% of Facebook users population in Indonesia which is now up to 31,784,080 Users (Socialbakers.com, 2010) or only 0.05% of total population in Indonesia. However, this public support reached more than 100.429 members in just a month according to Detik.com (Wednesday, 24/02/10). This Facebook group become a public advocacy from the members to Sri Mulyani as an individual in political problem.

From the case above, I argue that the Facebook Group to support SMI goes characterized in mediated and civic ends of the continua. The reason is because (1) this Facebook movement and consequently create public attention through social media. (2) This movement concerns to support individual, not to change a political system or policy. However the civic engagement on a political issue or public advocacy still means that democracy is growing under the facilitation of Facebook. I also argue that the Facebook supporter group is more a "virtual" action than a "real" action, due to the high intensity of virtual conversation.

SMI-Keadilan (Solidarity of Indonesian Society for Justice) Movement

The group support continued further by building the social movement of SMI Keadilan (Solidaritas Masyarakat Indonesia untuk Keadilan) or SMI Justice (Solidarity of Indonesian Society for Justice). It is also the abbreviation of the inspired figure of this movement, Sri Mulyani Indrawati (SMI). The social movement uses social media mainly to mobilize their activities in every province. Their activities include (a) create declaration event by inviting online members or other people who interested to support Sri Mulyani (Rosemarie, 2011) (b) Small meeting for the committee to coordinate the event and disseminate information about the movement of SMI Keadilan per province. Thus, they utilize Facebook with the name of SMI Keadilan and the province name, such as SMI Keadilan Jakarta Province, SMI Keadilan Yogyakarta Province, SMI Keadilan East Java Province, and many other provinces.

The movement existed per province and had own their own base camp, leaders, and activity. Before going further, I would like to address the definition of social movement, to indicate the relevant of the case study with the conversation on social movement. Diani (1992) defined social movement as "networks of informal interaction between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict on the basis of a shared collective identity" (p. 13). Thus, SMI-K Movement, could be define as a social movement since it consists of interaction between various individual, and share the same identity as the supporter of Sri Mulyani. In the case of SRI Party and SMI Keadilan Facebook Group or movement, the social media become the database for the party to organize their members for the verification process (Ward, 2011). I also argue that SMI Keadilan is a "real" movement which majorly using the combination of virtual connection and real connection to facilitate their interaction.

SRI Party

The next phase after Facebook group in provincial-based was they have the intention to build political party. The objective is to support their inspired figure to enter the presidential candidacy in 2014. The requirement to be a candidate of the president is each candidate should have a political party to bring his or her name in the presidential election. According to the constitution or UU Number two the year of 2008 about the requirement to build political party, every political party must have representative in minimum 75% regency, in every province, and 50% sub-district, in every regency. The founders of the party should also consist of 30 people in every province and 10 people in the central government or Jakarta (Pemiluindonesia.com). They need to go through the verification phase to make them registered as a political party. This movement started from 'like' and now are a political party called SRI (Serikat Rakyat Independen-Union of Independent People), the name of Sri Mulyani Indrawati also inspired the party's name.

The Party was built in May 2nd, 2011 and registered their name in Ministry of Law and Human Right Republic of Indonesia in August 3rd, 2011. The party's movement used publication through conventional mass media, digital media, face to face, small/large group meeting. However, until 27 November 2011, the members of SRI Party in their official Facebook are still around 753 members. The goal of a political party is clear, that it goes to the political sphere for political purpose. The activities of this party will follow the established political participation such as ask the signature and copy ID of members (for verification) and community or cultural engagement such as giving 'qurban' (animal) in Islamic celebration (Cakrawala News, 2011). They also have a meeting in The House of Integrity or branch office (Republika, 2011) and produce press releases or press conferences, website news update for political publication (Detik, 2011), etc. Thus, I argue that the political party goes to the pole of the political sphere. I also argue that political party could be "real" action, which is supported by virtual media but concern majorly to political membership, engage in political action such as campaign, voting, and actions.

The Dynamics of the Movement in Indonesia

From the map it is obvious that the movement have tendency to go further to political sphere and dominantly use symbolic or mediated sphere. I argue that political sphere has become one of the solutions to gain their objective and social media has become the main way to organize the movement. Therefore, here is the map of 'All about Sri' Movement.

Graphic. 1.2. The mapping of "SRI Movement"

Face to face (y)

<p>3. SRI Party (Official Facebook members around 700 members)</p> <p>Political sphere</p>	<p>(FB members are civic sphere (x))</p>
	<p>70-3000 people per province)</p> <p>1. Facebook Group "We Believe in</p>



	Integrity of SMI” (131.000 “like” click in FB)
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symbolic/mediated

According to the movement map, I argue that the movement was evolved from virtual- based action to real-based action and from civic sphere to political sphere. Here I found there are two dynamics according to the phase or development of this movement, which are the dynamics of citizenship and media.

The idea of Self Actualization Citizen is a new forms of citizenship in regards to response the development of digital media, and accessibility to the public (Bennett, 2008). While, the dutiful citizenship has developed as the longest-running citizenship paradigm for the last century (Schudson, 1998). However, if a virtual-based movement wants to have an impact in political decision making, especially in formalized system, such as in Indonesian presidential election, or house of representative membership, then the movement has to evolve backward and involve citizen in re-existing democratic engagement. It means that the idea of non-conventional citizenship in the beginning of this movement has to convert to conventional citizenship (Ward, 2011).

In a developing country especially in Indonesia, with high disparity of Internet penetration 16% and 80% who did not get Internet or social media will force this movement to go back to conventional communication such as face to face, small group, direct public communication, and traditional media (TV, Radio, Newspaper). The non-internet user public as the dominant public need to get information and interaction due to the battle of political campaign. Besides, virtual political participation is a new phenomenon compare to the traditional political participation such as attending the political figure campaign and oration.

The interesting point from the map is the decreasing amount of Facebook members. Even though, SRI Party is still new; however, it goes to further question on Earl and Shussman (2003) point of view on the ‘members’ convert to ‘users’, that people tend to disengage after the action they support in digital media develop further. The enthusiasm of membership who want to join the party need longer time to be gained members in Facebook, especially when we compare with the beginning of this movement in “We believe in the Integrity of Sri Mulyani Indrawati” Facebook Group. This situation challenges the commitment of members, since virtual members have weak-tie bonding (Kavanaugh et al, 2005). Thus, the commitment of virtual supporter cannot guarantee the “real” support (Loader, 2010; Diani 2000; Clark & Themudo 2003). Going back to find support in “real” action require double burdens. First, using conventional way will reach non Internet users will be more challenging due to the transactional cost and cultural condition, plus they also have to reach the commitment and trust from their prospective ‘real’ public to reach their objective.

Conclusion

In Indonesian case, the social media especially Facebook has several senses in facilitating democracy. (1) Facebook is used to counter information which negatively exposed in conventional media. From the empowerment of personal co-production, members are able to create their own meaning making process through interaction with other members. (2) Facebook facilitates the group or organization authority, in this case is admin, or group committee, to disseminate the message about group. (3) Facebook also can be used to create a new connection from solidarity and the same interest group of people, and database information for group or organization.

However, the challenges and dynamics also exist due to the problem of ‘digital divide’ in a developing country, political system, and public mindset. The “go backward” developments such as from conventional citizenship go back to non-conventional citizenship and from Self-Actualizing Citizenship back to Dutiful Citizenship. Not to mention, the advance used of digital media or social media go back to conventional communication, and gaining low level of commitment with easy and fast way go back to gaining high level of commitment with challenging and long term way. It is not impossible for the movement to create a history of successful virtual movement, which manifested to ‘real’ commitment; however, the challenges are waiting. Further research on the quantitative findings in commitment, trust, and motivation in the manifestation of virtual action to ‘real’ action can be the prospective call for research.

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