

Conference Paper

University Student Perspectives on Collective Action through Social-Media Activity on Campus Democracy

Eti Hadiati^{1*}, Agus Dwiyanto², Diah Ayu Setianingrum³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung

ORCID

Eti Hadiati: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8055-1077>

Agus Dwiyanto: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0045-3408>

Diah Ayu Setianingrum: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0539-7858>

Abstract.

Campus democracy is useful for creating a condition that allows all groups within the university (students, rectors, teaching staff, employees, and workers) to have equal rights in formulating policies, and the orientation of the implementation of education in tertiary institutions. However, implementing democracy in educational contexts, particularly in Indonesia, is still hindered by obstacles visible through the presence of some issues with democratic principles being violated. The purpose of this study was to examine and provide an overview of university student perspectives on collective action through social-media activity on campus democracy. This study utilizes qualitative research methods by deploying questionnaires, and uses documentation as data collection techniques. It studies the students of one university in Lampung as the subject of the research. The data collection was performed at different time intervals since depth comprehension through questionnaires is required in this study. The results indicated the importance of social media for students in campus democracy, one of which is to cultivate the student's critical awareness of events that occur on campus. This refers to not only political collective action but also social collective action as well. Given the limitations of this study which only used students from one department on one campus, the researchers hope that further research with a similar topic in the future can expand this type of research to not only include students, but also intra-community interactions, and not only on a scale of one room.

Keywords: Campus' Democracy, Collective Action, Students' Perspectives, Social Media

Corresponding Author: Eti Hadiati; email: etihadiati@radenintan.ac.id

Published 26 September 2023

Publishing services provided by Knowledge E

© Eti Hadiati et al. This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use and redistribution provided that the original author and source are credited.

Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the Iconais Conference Committee.

OPEN ACCESS

1. INTRODUCTION

The vast advancement of technology leads the human civilization to the modern era where information can be accessed in just one click away. The progression of technology is not only affecting the IT itself as the foundation, but every aspect of human life also feels the immense impact, for instance, it brings improvement to how democracy is implemented. Smith et al., (2013) give examples of this by stating that technology that was utilized to link and magnify citizen groups had a greater political influence. For example, interactive websites in both the Burma Election Tracker and the Citizen Security and Justice initiative in Mexico acted as umbrellas, uniting various coalition groups around a single campaign topic. This resulted in improved coordination and collaboration among the organizations, a larger influence on their challenges, and highlighted the transformational potential of strategic technology application. Another global example on how technology covers the realm of democracy can be witnessed in Estonia, where an E-voting system linked to the national ID card promised secure voting in a country where modern residents increasingly interact with their government through digital means, until a group of Finnish and American academics discovered holes in the system's security (York, 2018). However, facing the modern global era heads on, Indonesian has a greater thing to be taken into account. According to Prayogi (2018), the fundamental issue that the Indonesian people face in this global period is a lack of high-quality human resources to participate and play an active role in development implementation, both nationally and globally. To solve the challenge of the influence of globalization, youth and students must play a vital role as a youth figure who must be ready and responsive in making his contribution as agents of change. Democracy in a modern era brings so many changes and features, one of the which is the collective action. Through the advancement of internet and technology, the action not only could be executed remotely, but also practically by utilising the social media. It is widely known that digital activism in the form of collective action through social media has a great impact and proven to be effective to implement. The research conducted by Ahuja et al., (2018) concluded that when network development is the goal of digital activism, (social) media with better affordances for encouraging environmental shaping were positively associated to the success of digital activism. Thus, the goal of digital activism is synthesis, (social) media with stronger affordances for encouraging contagion were positively associated to the success of digital activism.

But implementing democracy in educational contexts, particularly in Indonesia, is still got obstacle to the presence of some issues with democratic principles being

violated. Some of the issues are authoritarian professors, social discrimination, fighting among students, and bullying among students. Some teachers continue to use the authoritarian teaching technique. Interactions between instructors and students in schools are likewise becoming less democratic. This is demonstrated by the presence of prejudice and bullying. The majority of incidences of prejudice in society are prompted by the prevalence of socioeconomic inequality. Hence, education is critical in instilling democratic ideas and ideals in our young generation. Schools, as educational providers, must be able to arrange democratic education in this circumstance (Nur & Sudarsono, 2019).

The conditions aforementioned triggered the author to analyze the students in higher educations regarding their perspective of the modern democracy product in the form of collective action through social media, in the circumstances of campus' democracy.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Campus' Democracy

The initiation begins by defining the first keyword, democracy. The term "democracy" is derived from Ancient Greek: *demos* means "the people," and *kratein* means "to govern." As a result, *demokratia*, or "democracy," meaning "government of the people." Democracy can refer to popular governance, representational government, participation in government, republican government, or some combination of the above (Harrison & Boyd, 2018). Elliott (1994) defines democracy as an institutional strategy for reaching political choices in which individuals obtain the authority to determine how to compete for the people's vote in a competitive manner. Meanwhile Dewey (2001) defines democracy as more than just a type of governance; it is basically a way of living together, of communicating with one another. The expansion in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest to the point where each has to refer his own action to that of others, and consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the removal of those barriers of class, race, and national territory that prevented men from comprehending the full import of their activity. So in short, democracy stands for the rights of both individual and parties, political and non-political, to speak the unspoken in a competitive climate.

Campus democracy is useful for creating a condition that allows all elements within the university (students, rectors, teaching staff, employees, and workers) to have equal rights in formulating policies and the orientation of the implementation of education in

tertiary institutions (Hairul, 2019). Without the mass participation of students, there is no campus democracy. If there is no democracy on campus, then the purpose of the university is certain to serve only the interests of a few people and the capitalists.

2.2. Collective Action

Wright et al., (1990) define Collective Action as well as distinguish the terms from Individual Action. A group member engages in collective action if he or she acts as a representative of the group and the activity is aimed at improving the overall situation of the group. Individual action, on the other hand, is activity aimed towards bettering one's particular situation. Despite the obvious societal relevance of these various reactions to inequality, a third key difference is required. The main focus of collective action is on common interests and the possible benefits of coordinated action. As is the case in resource mobilization theory which bases its assumption that collective action is a response of rational political actors to the conflict conditions they face (Wortmann, 2016).

Collective action begins when resources can be mobilized by movement leaders and when socio-political conditions are open to mobilization. The main focus of collective action is on common interests and the possible benefits of coordinated action. Collective action was therefore defined as any action that benefits the whole. Although this formal definition does not rule out individual activities, because individual supply of communal benefits is a significant reality, most researchers focus on behaviorally collective behaviors as well (Oliver, 1993). Shadiqi (2021) conveys examples of collective action such as demonstrations, protests, extended marches, speeches, theatrical activities, and petition signatures. Collective action, by definition, differs from individual action, collective behavior, social movement, and social transformation. Collective action activity can be classified as normative or non-normative.

From the opinions expressed by various experts above, it can be concluded that collective action is a form of act which can be practiced or performed in a group of people, or, in an individual manner as long as that individual represents the voices of the people collectively. Collective action is carried out in the hope that it could bring the greater good for the community or the group of people involved in the action.

2.3. Social-Media

Social media has been characterized in several ways. Wolf et al., (2018) define social media as a platform for creating profiles, making explicit and traversing relationships,

or various forms of websites that allow profile creation and visibility of relationships between users, web-based applicat

ions that provide functionality for sharing, relationships, groups, conversations, and profiles, and that also functioned as a set of information technologies that facilitate interactions and networking.

Ahuja et al., (2018) conveyed that social media is an integral aspect of one's life, from shopping to electronic communication, education, and business. Social media has a significant impact on people's lifestyles. Social media sites and blogs are examples of places where individuals may readily connect with one another. Since the introduction of social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook as important vehicles for reporting, journalists and their organizations have walked a tightrope.

Atmaja (2019) added, Social media is a type of internet documentation. Because of its open and changing character, everything displayed there is logged by the indexing engine and can be utilized as legally binding evidence. In this instance, a publicist must understand what information should and should not be communicated to the public, as well as how to communicate it. Because social media reaches a large number of people, a thorough grasp of information transmission and cross-cultural communication is required.

So in conclusion, social media is an internet-based community forum where people are reacting, giving and spreading information, communicating and interacting with each other with no boundary.

2.4. Relevant Previous Studies

Spier (2017), in his study, conveyed that People tend to organize political protest and resistance using various social media channels. This phenomena refers to a shift in societal structure and behavior caused by ICT. Social media platforms have been used to mobilize collective action, which has arguably led to political upheaval in some circumstances. The phenomenon also suggests that the arrangement of information influences the organization of social institutions with which it interacts. Another aspect of the problem is the use of social media for activist repression, governmental and corporate monitoring, commodification of social processes, demobilization, or mobilization of collective action toward unwanted objectives. Zhao & Liang (2022) identified that This study investigates the direct and indirect effects of social media attention on IPOCA in the context of China's COVID-19 pandemic mitigation efforts. Overall, both attention to social media (gov) and attention to social media (nongov) directly predicted IPOCA

in terms of direct impacts. The indirect effect of government attention on IPOCA was considerably moderated by social identity. Other indirect impacts were not found to be substantial. Several intriguing trends about the function of social media in encouraging collective action, as well as the processes that mediate social media use and collective action in China, were examined in this study. In Indonesian political context, for example, the protest action carried out by students at the DPR building in September 2019 was a type of collective action that was carried out several times and was well prepared. Individuals signing petitions online at home, the office, or anywhere else are engaging in collective action. Despite the fact that protest activities and petition signing actions have varying numbers of participants, both have collective aims (Shadiqi, 2021).

Hasna et al., (2022) uttered the usage of digital media, particularly social media, is frequently related with information democracy since it transforms people from content readers to content providers. This is a departure from broadcast mechanics, based on interactions among authors, individuals, and peers. The key feature of social media is first, the social media media incorporates many social channels, with internet being the primary channel. Second, social media evolves over time, implying that it is still evolving. Third, social media is interactive. The audience has the right to speak and can give feedback. Social media has the ability to sway public opinion. Fundraising attempts to gather support, which is quickly becoming a social media message delivery powerhouse.

Yet the dark side of utilizing social media in engaging collective action is the existence of fake news or hoax. Maria (2020) explained the spread of fake news on social media platforms used for collective action has the ability to influence the framing process, resource mobilization, and the development of political chances. Through the intermediate consequence of communicational ambidexterity, the possibility of disseminating information on social media impacts the three collective action processes. In other words, social media platforms enable collective action participants to communicate both within and outside of the group of individuals involved in collective action, therefore impacting the three main processes. According to this viewpoint, the impact of fake news on collective action on social media is significant since it impacts both internal communication and coordination as well as outward recruitment activities. She also added that the social media platforms are intended to lower the cost of information circulation among users while increasing information circulation and content production. A negative externality of such a design aim is that the social media platforms provide no obstacles to the spread of bogus news. Even if not all social media platforms are

relaxed about fake news, many treat it as any other type of content shared by their users and take no action against it.

3. METHODS

The purpose of this study is to provide an overview of university students' perspectives on collective action through social media on campus' democracy, so this type of research is included in qualitative research whose purpose is to try to find meaning, investigate the process, both in the context of individuals, groups or situations. The type of research used is descriptive (illustration) by taking a qualitative approach, namely the type of research that describes situations and events. This is based on the reason that this research produces data from informants that are original or what they are, in accordance with the research questions posed in the data collection process, then analyzes with the background words of the respondents' answers.

The primary data of this study is the result of questionnaires with the research subject, namely the students of Islamic State University in Lampung province. Questionnaires is a qualitative research approach that combines a series of open questions (questions that stimulate conversation) with the possibility for the interviewer to go deeper into certain themes or responses further (Given, 2008). While the secondary data, which is a detailed form of data made by documentation processes regarding the profiles of informants, are the results of typing primary data into Microsoft Word formatted (docx) files. Hence the data collection techniques utilized in this study are semi-structured interview and documentation.

Data triangulation is a technique of checking data collected from various sources in various ways and methods, and also from various times. There are three types of triangulation that are explained in the presentation, namely source triangulation, data collection technique triangulation and time triangulation (Wijaya, 2018). Based on the nature of this particular study that uses multi-data sources and multi-person as subjects, triangulation of data sources is the right option to be used as a technique in determining the validation or validity of this research data. Data triangulation to test the credibility of a data is done by checking the data that has been obtained from various data sources such as interviews, archives, and other documents, in which case, data from interviews with informants will be used as primary data (Carter et al., 2014).

4. RESULTS

The results of research on Analysis of University Students' Perspectives on Collective Action through Social Media on Campus' Democracy will be described systematically, starting from the utilization of social media as media for intra-campus collective action to The role of Social Media in the development of intra-campus collective action and Democracy.

4.1. The Utilization of Social Media as Media for Intra-Campus Collective Action

Social media allows users to communicate with one another as well as with the general public. The information purpose for utilizing social media is to spread social activities on campus, both those that will be carried out and those that have already been carried out. This is also beneficial to the larger community since it allows them to witness how democracy is evolving on campus without having to meet in person and visit the university.

Based on the narrative of all informants, social media is very helpful in carrying out collective action both inside and outside the campus. The collective actions that have been carried out are very diverse, ranging from activities of a religious nature, organizational activities, collective activities that are social and community as well as political in nature. The collective actions explained by the sources that have been carried out so far on the basis of social media are; a) Collective action in the promotion of the election for the chair of the student senate, *BEM*, and student association leaders, b) Collective action in promoting intra- and off-campus religious-based activities, c) Collective action in social service in the form of donations to deal with the impact of disasters and calamities that individual, group or community in nature, and d) Collective action to voice criticism and aspirations of students on campus political issues, campus policies and government policies.

This demonstrated that students are engaged in social action. The personal identity theme of student social media is more than simply a place of existence; it also enhances student self-understanding by exhibiting various images or videos of social activities and adding persuasive remarks. The process creates an image of how a student voluntarily takes on social activity tasks. This allows for an indirect introduction to the public of intra-campus collective action. The goal of social integration is to encourage students to become democratic participants in social collective action by displaying inspirational

sentences on social media, while also serving as a forum for students who want to carry out collective action both internally or between organizations and students, as well as externally intersecting directly with the community.

Motives for social contact serve as a platform for interaction among students, between students and the community, and between communities and those who follow the college social media fanpage. The material provided on the social media fanpage is intended to demonstrate that students are capable of carrying out their social responsibilities. Social media is employed as a tool with persuasive power so that students and the general public may join or participate in the democratic arena through social movements. Furthermore, social media is utilized as a promotional platform to entice new students to join and receive assistance in carrying out social activities. Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok are the most often utilized social media platforms for publishing activities while also encouraging students to aid social activities collectively.

4.2. The role of Social Media in the development of intra-campus collective action and Democracy

The importance of social media for students in campus democracy, one of which is to cultivate a student's critical awareness of events that occur on campus. Not only political collective action, such as the election of the Student Executive Board chairman, but also social collective action, such as raising funds for natural disaster victims, promoting artistic or socio-cultural activities for students, or informing the larger community about the vision, mission, programs, and activities held by campus internal parties.

Based on the narrative of the research subject, social media also plays a vital role in gathering students to carry out activities that are social services. The activities carried out range from humanitarian to religious in nature. This is most often carried out by student associations and BEMs, but not infrequently even the smallest units of student organizations such as extracurricular organizations also often carry out encouragement of collective action activities such as calls for fundraising or donations, volunteering for teaching and disaster management, and so on.

However, the role of social media in collective action that specifically examines and criticizes policies, both government policies and campus internal policies, by all research subjects, is still considered lacking. This could be caused by the large number of students who consider that criticizing government policies and policies of campus officials through collective action on social media tends to have a greater risk than carrying out situational collective action such as carrying out mass demonstrations. This,

as stated by several research subjects, was caused by students' anxiety and worry that collective social criticism through social media would be easily detected individually rather than doing it directly.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Discussion

Based on the research findings above, it can be interpreted that all research subjects believe that collective action carried out on the basis of social media fully supports and facilitates student democratic activities both on campus and off campus. It is believed that the use of social media is an effective and efficient step because apart from being cheap and advanced, social media instruments can be accessed by more individuals than other media. The growth of the pace of democracy on campus, which had been halted due to the COVID-19 contagious virus pandemic, can return and continue to stretch with the encouragement of collective action through social media which has been and continues to be carried out by students to maintain the integrity of democratic freedoms.

However, the source also stated that there are still things to watch out for even if collective action activities to support the integrity of democratic life on campus use social media. This is fake news or hoaxes, which can spread so quickly and are not easy to filter or prevent. Fake news circulating on digital platforms, one of which is social media, has a great chance to become an obstacle to collective activities which results in students' democratic freedoms not flowing. However, with a firm belief and heart, collective action and democratic activities on campus will not be hampered by the rampant fake news circulating.

5.2. Conclusion

Collective action is a group of people who have the same goal to form a social activity. Informal groups that are formed in an organization with an unlimited and structured number of members have the aim of making social change. Collective action emphasizes the collective aspect, while collective action can occur as a result of intentional formation which adds a deliberate aspect to form an organization that aims to make social changes in people's lives. These aspects are: a) Students, b) Campus Parties, c) General Public. Collective action is different from the collective behavior

discussed earlier, collective action is marked by a common goal or interest. Social Media plays an important role in communicating in student collective action activities, such as Collective action in the promotion of the election for the chair of the student senate, BEM, and student association leaders, then Collective action in promoting intra- and off-campus religious-based activities, Collective action in social service in the form of donations to deal with the impact of disasters and calamities that are individual, group or community in nature, and finally Collective action to voice criticism and aspirations of students on campus political issues, campus policies and government policies. In addition, the account is also used as a medium of communication in cyberspace between fellow students or students and the community. Even though the freedom to convey aspirations clad in democracy has concerns about the spread of fake news or hoaxes, the research subjects believe that so far, fake news has not been able to flex and relax enthusiasm in strengthening democratic activities on campus in the form of collective action carried out using social media. Given the limitations of this study which only used students from one department on one campus, the researchers hope that research with a similar heading in the future can expand this type of research not only to include students, but also intra-community interactions, and not only on a scale of one room. only scope, but multiple scopes.

References

- [1] Ahuja MK, Patel P, Suh A. The Influence of social media on collective action in the context of digital activism: An affordance approach. *Proceedings of the Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*. 2018 January-March:2203–2212.
- [2] Atmaja DZ. *PERAN PEMANFAATAN MEDIA SOSIAL*. LLDIKTI Wilayah III. November 2019:1-73.
- [3] Carter N, Bryant-Lukosius D, DiCenso A, Blythe J, Neville AJ. The use of triangulation in qualitative research. *Oncol Nurs Forum*. 2014 Sep;41(5):545–7.
- [4] Dewey J. *Democracy and Education*. The Pennsylvania State University. 2001
- [5] Elliott JE. Joseph A. Schumpeter and The Theory of Democracy. *Rev Soc Econ*. 1994;52(4):280–300.
- [6] Given L. *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. 2008. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909>
- [7] Hairul N. *Demokrasi Kampus*. Lembaga Pers Mahasiswa PENDAPA Taman Siswa. 2019.

- [8] Harrison K, Boyd T. Democracy. Democracy. 2018; <https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526137951.00007>
- [9] Hasna S, Komunikasi DI, Ilmu F. Tindakan Kolektif Masyarakat Jaringan Di Indonesia : Aktivisme Sosial Media Pada Aksi # Gejayanmemanggil. *Interaksi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*. 2022;11(1):25–34.
- [10] Maria A. (2020). The (un)invited in Collective Action on Social Media: A Socio-Technical Perspective of Fake News. *The 6th International Workshop on Socio-Technical Perspective in IS Development (STPIS)*. 2020:180–185.
- [11] Nur S, Sudarsono S. Implementasi Pendidikan Demokrasi Dalam Pembelajaran IPS Study Kasus Sma Negeri 6 Takalar. *Equilibrium: Jurnal Pendidikan*. 2019;6(2):95–103.
- [12] Oliver PE. Formal Models of Collective Action. *Annu Rev Sociol*. 1993;19(1):271–300.
- [13] Prayogi R. Peningkatan Kesadaran Demokrasi dalam Organisasi Badan Eksekutif Mahasiswa Universitas Pasir Pengaraian. *Journal of Education [JEHSS]*. Humaniora and Social Sciences. 2018;1(1):52–9.
- [14] Shadiqi MA. Aksi Kolektif. Psikologi Politik. Penerbit Buku Kompas; 2021:395–437.
- [15] Smith M, Beck J, Cooper CL, Cox C, Ottaway D, Talbot R. Participation and Technology. In *Introducing Organizational Behaviour*. 2013; https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-16833-0_12
- [16] Spier S. *Collective Action 2.0: The Impact of Social Media on Collective Action*. Chandos Publishing; 2017.
- [17] Wijaya H. *Analisis Data Kualitatif Ilmu Pendidikan Teologi*. 2018.
- [18] Wolf M, Sims J, Sims J. Social Media? What Social Media? SOCIAL MEDIA? WHAT SOCIAL. *UK Academy for Information Systems Conference Proceedings*. 2018.
- [19] Wortmann S. Collective Consciousness. *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. 2016:1–3; <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165518.wbeosc062.pub2>
- [20] Wright SC, Taylor DM, Moghaddam FM. Responding to membership in a disadvantaged group: from acceptance to collective protest. *J Pers Soc Psychol*. 1990;58(6):994–1003.
- [21] York JC. The Impact of Digital Technology upon Democracy. *Japan SPOTLIGHT, December*.
- [22] Zhao Xi, Liang X. (2022). *The Impact of Social Media Use on Online Collective Action During China ' s COVID-19 Pandemic Mitigation: A Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA) Perspective*. 2018;(16):85–106; <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/17576/3628>