Netnography Study About Anonym Account @digeeembok and Scandal on Twitter

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Abstract— **Twitter has become one of the most popular social media, and quick in providing information to wider community. This study examines the followers of an anonymous account on Twitter that reveals a personal scandal amin illegal cases which happen to the former director of a largest national company. Using the netnography method, the follower's communication patterns will be analyzed using three communication layers, the micro, meso, and macro levels. This research shows that social media can change the focus and perspective of people in seeing a case through a scandal which published by an anonymous account.**

Keywords— twitter, netnography, anonym account, scandal

I. INTRODUCTION

The technology development have an important role in digital sector, especially digitalization in media industry. This digitalization affect people to use electronic devices with the purpose to communicate and sharing information through digital media, such as social media. The presence social media, makes society not only limited to produce the information, but also they can created the information as well. [1] Social media has become a popular media to spread any information to wider society. This study will focus on discussing about Twitter. There are many types of social media, but Twitter had specialization to use "retweet" feature in purpose to spread real-time information better than any social media. Twitter's ability to move conversations from interpersonal to the public is also one of the platform's defining features. [2] According to We are Social survey in 2019, Indonesia had 150 million social media users, with 52% of them were the Twitter active users.

Twitter has seven features such as thread, polling, hashtag, retweet, quote-tweet, topics and hide replies. Each feature has specialization, for example Twitter thread features becoming popular nowadays, because with this feature, users can share an information with a sequence tweet. Thread can provide additional context, tweet update and an extended point by connecting multiple tweets together. Various topics are written on Twitter thread, such as personal experience, politics views, tips and tricks, hobbies and gossip which become a popular topic on Twitter. Recently, the former chief executive of an Indonesian airlines company was entangled in legal issues. The problem started when some of the company executives went to France to picked up a new aircraft which has been purchased. Those executives went abroad without permission from the ministry. When they are arrived in Indonesia, the custom staff found out some illegal cargo in the new aircraft, such as luxury motorcycle spare parts, and expensive bicycle. As those stuffs are classified as luxury goods, the owner should be charged with a large amount of tax fee in legal entry. The smuggled stuffs are allegedly owned by the chief executive of the airlines company. This case resulted in the dismissal of the chief executive by the ministry.

This case became a hot topic in public, as an anonymous account @digeeembok blowup the story in the Twitter threads. Started when @digeeembok posted a thread about internal dilapidation of the company, related to the inability of the former chief executive who involved in illegal cargo scandals. This anonymous account also explained about sex scandal in the company, the sexual harassment and affairs scandal. This account blatantly mentions certain documents, pictures, and videos, which are attached to be evidence supporting this story. As a result, netizens are enthusiastic to follow @digeeembok and follow the story updates. This thread by @digeeembok, made the citizens started to changed their focus, and became more enthusiastic to the mistress scandal, and the plastic surgery issues related to those mistresses. They even named the mistresses as "gundik", which before this word became popular, it has similar meaning with "gendak" in Javanese, means a woman who have an extramarital relationship, especially with a married man. According to KBBI, the word "gundik" has two specific definition, as a mistress and seraglio. In the era of colonialism, a woman who was later bailed out with money and then become mistress by a Dutch man, these women were called 'gundik'. [3]

This study examined the communication patterns among the community of @digeeembok's followers. The communication patterns of @digeeembok's followers will be interpreted in layers of communication: micro, macro, and meso levels. Micro level is an interpersonal communication between users by using the symbol "@" followed by username. [4] The sign of mention "@" is a feature that enable users to send and receive messages resulting in two-way communication. Meso level is a basic level of tweet dissemination across the follower-followee network, which Twitter is fundamentally based on the constitutes the meso level of communication. At meso level, the flow of information occurs as the capacity for its users to follow one another—that is, to subscribe to the stream of updates originating from the followed user. Last is macro level, where the flow of information occurs with specific syntax called [5]hashtag "#". As many information flows by hash symbol '#' through Twitter's timeline, users require a filter to meet the information needed. The hashtag helps

users to narrow the range of irrelevant information by typing simple keywords preceded by the hash symbol '#'. [6] This study aimed to determine the communication patterns and the interactions on anonymous account @digeeembok, and to find out about the perspectives of @digeeembok's followers about the main case of scandal, before and after its being blown up by @digeeembok. To see the followers perspective in this case, researchers will examine the replies from followers on @digeeembok 's thread.

II. METHOD

This is a qualitative research with a procedure using descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from observable actors.[7]This research has been done, using a method called netnography, that is defined as a qualitative research methodology that adapts social science ethnographic to explore the communication activities of cultures and communities in the online world that occur through computer-mediated systems.[8] A research with netnography method is produced within relatively short periods of time as well as ethnographic research, where the research occurs only until the interaction of the community is found. [9]

The subject of this study is the anonymous account @digeeembok, and thread of #DirutGarudaKancut, posted between 4-15 December 2019, with 280 tweets in total, including the replies of followers on the thread.

III. RESULT

Twitter is like public sphere in the digital world, it means that people in the public sphere can speak freely to convey their ideas in response to social issues. [10] Twitter users have some information on their account, such as avatar, username, personal description, place and time the account was created. User can post a tweet that will be appeared on timeline and profile page of the account. Twitter only allowed 140 characters in a tweet back then, now that the limit is 280 characters. Tweet-threading become more popular recently, some threads use the hashtag '#' to categorize those tweets based on the topic discussed. In addition after use the hashtag "#", user can give a relevant keyword or phrase to categorize their tweet in certain topic. Meanwhile, to interact each other, a user should be a followers to another users by following their account and vice versa. "Followers" is a list contains the users who follow your account, and "Following" is list contains all the users you follow on Twitter. The users can interact each other by mentioning other's username, and followers can read the updates of their following account on the homepage. All Information and tweets on Twitter are public by default, unless the user chooses to make its account protected, so the tweets are only visible to their followers.

This study examined the anonymous account @digeeembok. As in early March 2020, @digeeembok had 469k followers and followed 51 accounts. The anonymous account, uses @digeeembok as the username, and 'el diablo, 魔鬼, השטן, digembok e-nya tiga' as the display name. "El-diablo" as the display name, comes from Spanish, '魔鬼' is a Mandarin from Móguǐ, and 'השטן' from Hebrew, all of them have the same meaning ; 'Devil'. Twitter bio is coupled with some personal descriptive items, and @digeeembok wrote 'legendtwit, spesialis orbitin gundik jadi artis, ini

akun ketujuh kaya jumlah hari dalam satu minggu, IG: (@)digeeembokASLI' as his Twitter bio. The account was created in July 2009, and posted 2.656 tweets. On December 4th, 2019 , @digeeembok started the thread about illegal cargo scandal and other scandals related to internal problems at the airlines. The thread contains of 280 tweets in total and ended on December 15th 2019.

Moreover, @digeembok marked the thread with the hashtag #DirutGarudaKancut. The analysis result using TweetStats is shown in the table below.
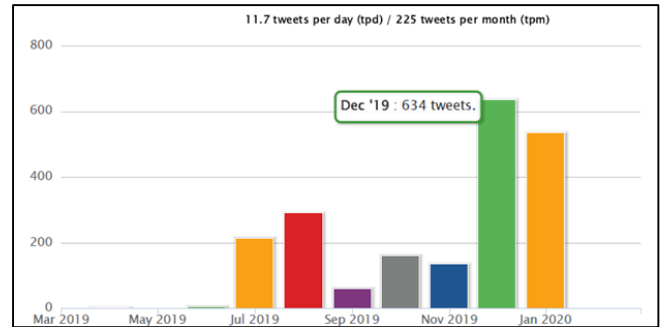

Fig. 1. Tweet posted in @digeeembok between Mar 2019 – Jan 2020.

From the table it is shown that @digeeembok actively posted the tweets since June 2019. The most tweet posted is on December 2019 with 634 tweets in total, and declined in January 2020. In December 2019, @digeeembok actively posted the thread about #DirutGarudaKancut with 280 tweets in total.

At the micro level, an interpersonal communication occurs by including an @mention to another user. In this level, @digeeembok rarely gave an interaction towards his followers, but his followers often gave a respond towards his tweet through replies section or quoted-tweet. A micro-level communication is found between followers, they're always replied the tweet which posted by @digeeembok.

Fig. 2. Micro level, the replies from some followers in the thread.

At the meso level, once an account has gained followers, the tweets posted by the owner of that account will reach all those users who follow the account—if they actively monitor the tweets originating from their network of followed accounts. This default level of tweet dissemination across the follower-followee network upon which Twitter is

fundamentally based constitutes the meso layer of communication. [10] At the end of 2019, @digeeembok had around 200k followers, and then increasing significantly to around 460k followers at beginning of March 2020. The followers made a network by retweeting, reply and liked the tweets from #DirutGarudaKancut thread, which subsequently will appear in their timeline. Thus, the tweet will be seen by their followers. This interaction can be seen through how many tweets are replied to, retweeted and liked. For example, at the beginning of March. the first tweet in the thread #DirutGarudaKancut, already have 1.6k replies, 33.5k retweet, and 46.6k likes, but the number will increase every day.

Fig. 3. Meso level in the first tweet of the threads, networking via replies, retweet and likes by the followers.

At macro level, the communication occurs with specific hash symbol "#" called hashtag. The hashtag on Twitter are used to categorize tweets with relevant subject. Hashtag helps users to find related information they need in accordance with "#". The anonymous account, @digeeembok, used hashtag "#" to mark specific case in the thread he posted. For example, in the case of Garuda Indonesia, @digeeembok used #DirutGarudaKancut to mark the topics discussed.

Fig. 4. Macro level, the application of hashtag '#' for discussion.

Aside from illegal cargo case on #DirutGarudaKancut thread, @digeeembok also discussed about the behavior of the former of chief executive such as money laundering and the mistress scandal of some executives. But as this thread became popular, the main topic shifted from illegal cargo to mistress scandal, that later popularized the word "gundik". From 280 tweets on #DirutGarudaKancut thread, the topic that is mainly discussed is about the mistress of the executives, compared to the illegal luxury goods cargo of the chief executive. Some people who mentioned in the thread, had reported admin @digeeembok to the police, which the person behind the anonymous account is still mystery until today. The hashtag #NetizenBersamaDigeeembok also emerged from Twitter netizens to support @digeeembok in order to unpacked another scandal.

IV. CONCLUSION

Twitter is a social network platform that provides real-time information, from general information to big information. But this fact does not automatically make the information shared on Twitter are valid. In additions purpose to providing various types of information, Twitter also become a virtual room for discussion, and media to express opinions. Digital communication is very easy to do, because the messages that are delivered through social media are very easy to pack, and give a huge impact to public as well. From the beginning, the thread consistently talked about fraud and chief's inability to lead the airlines company, but unfortunately, the tweets posted by @digeeembok did not focus on the main illegal cargo case but more concern on mistress scandal in the company.

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