Digital Movement Dynamics of Opinion Mobilization Ahead the Demonstration in Indonesia

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Abstract. On April 11, 2022, there was a demonstration with the main demands of rejecting the discourse on postponing the elections in Indonesia. The discourse has been widely discussed on social media, especially Twitter, with various narratives and opinions. This article aims to analyze the actors involved in the dynamics of the digital movement in the mobilization of public opinion by relating it to demonstration in the real world. The research method used is descriptive qualitative using a Social Network Analysis (SNA) approach as an analytical tool in data collection and processing. The data source is taken from the results of scrawling as many as 9,923 Tweets on Twitter with the keyword "*Penundaan Pemilu*" (Postponement of the Elections) on April 10–11, 2022. The results of the study show that the key actors in the issues that arise are scattered from various elements, but most certainly are accounts with many followers (influencers). The postponement of the election as the main issue is also blurred and biased by other issues, such as the issue of beating Ade Armando during the demonstration. The use of hashtags makes it easier for us to see the alignments and direction of the narrative that is raised. Opinion mobilization that appears before and during mass action is very complex and undirected because each actor or party has their own interests in this issue and tries to win public opinion. The implication of this research is to provide an overview of the roles between actors in narrative debate and mobilizing public opinion on Twitter.

Keywords: Digital Movement · Opinion Mobilization · SNA · Twitter

1 Introduction

A mass demonstration from a number of student alliances from all over Indonesia gathered in Jakarta on Monday, April 11, 2022 [1]. The demonstrations have grabbed the attention of the public and become a topic of discussion in the mass media and social media.

The presence of social media is changing the way information is being spread to become increasingly rapid and unstoppable. Social media has also become a democratic alternative medium of communication that allows people to communicate and have a voice without intermediaries. The boundaries that stretch are dwindling and oppose hierarchical communication patterns in the political system [2].

In social media, the activism movement can be expressed, one of which aims to mobilize public opinion to get wider support for the activism movement carried out. One of the patterns used to broadcast the issues brought is through the hashtag movement (#). The phenomenon of using hashtags in the activism movement in the social media space is also known to be part of the digital activism movement.

The term digital activity is also referred to by [3] as a Digital Movement of Opinion (DMO). DMO was born as a form of technological development, especially social media, where this media creates a virtual network between one user and another [4].

This movement can be interpreted as the interaction activity of social media users who are currently quickly and easily commenting on emerging issues, with the aim of mobilizing public opinion.

Through certain hashtags or keywords, social media users show their attitudes, namely agree or disagree with an issue or policy by post comments with specific hashtags. This hashtag then creates a community, where social media users who do not know each other or follow each other, can discuss the same topic, even with the same attitude, in cyberspace [5].

The demonstration on April 11, 2022 was no exception, which also broadcast its various demands through social media. They demanded a number of things, one of the main demands of which was to reject the discourse of postponing elections or electoral amendments [6]. This action was accompanied by a hashtag that was widely raised, be it a hashtag that agreed with the action and its demands, to a hashtag that rejected the action and demands.

For example, when it approached the April 11 demo, there was a lot of hashtag wars #MahasiswaBergerak and #SayaBersamaJokowi. This opinion war through hashtags occurred on social media Twitter and had become a *trending topic* since Saturday, April 9, 2022 [7].

The interesting thing about the emergence of this hashtag is that there are indications of mounting issues in the mobilization of public opinion on digital activism in the social media space. Because, from the demands brought by the student group, nothing leads to the overthrow of power like what is narrated on the hashtag.

This study aims to see how the riding and thwarting of issues occurs in the mobilization of public opinion on digital activism, by conducting a study on the keyword "Penundaan Pemilu" (postpone the election) on Twitter social media which then takes *a tweet* on the eve of the mass action occurs, namely April 11–12, 2022. This study also wants to see how the discourse of postponing elections is formed on social media ahead of mass action, so that it can see a map of actors and patterns of spreading issues that occur.

In looking at previous research, researchers used Vosviewer Software to process a network map of research publications on 'Opinion Mobilization' in Scopus indexed publications. VOSviewer itself is software for building and visualizing bibliometric networks [8]. The network map obtained is shown in Fig. 1.

The word "digital activism" also appears in the upper d bibliometric network with the following discussion keywords is shown in Fig. 2.
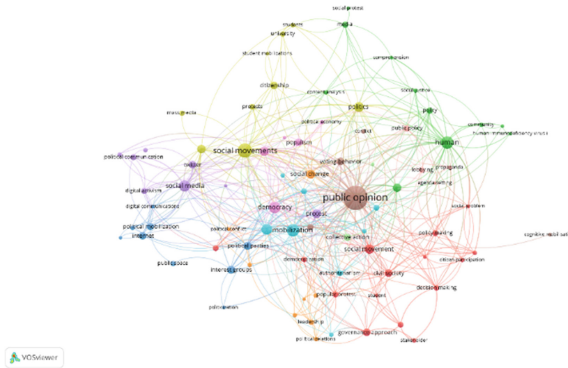
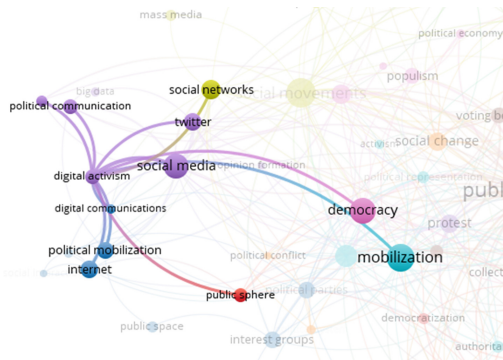**Fig. 1.** Bibliometrics Network on the "Opinion Mobilization" keyword

Fig. 2. Bibliometrics Network on the "Digital Activism" cluster

In the map, the word "digital activism" is directly and closest to "digital communication", "political communication", "political mobilization", "internet", "public sphere", "social media", "twitter", "social networks", "democracy", and "mobilization.

This spectrum is far apart from "public opinion". However, it has a great connection with the word "mobilization". Thus, the spectrum of digital activism does not yet have a reference that associates with "public opinion".

To make it easier to read the bibliometric network analysis map above, researchers outlined it in the results of previous studies. A researcher, [9] mentions that cyber activism has a significant effect on public opinion with regard to gender participation in movements, education levels, political affiliation and the use and manipulation of the Internet for political activism.

Other references are also written by [10] which calls social media is no longer a space that supports democratic debate. This is related because social media can act as a multiplier of public opinion and a battle of analysis of social discourse that already exists in society. Thus, social media is not only filled with opponents of the ruler, but also those who support – the two conflict with each other opinions.
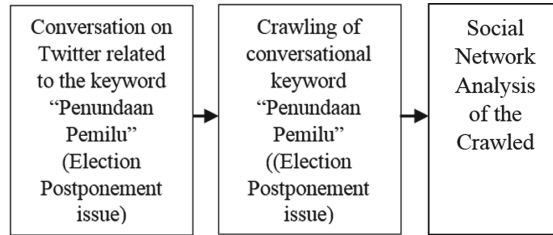
Conversation on Twitter related to the keyword "Penundaan Pemilu" (Election Postponement issue)	Crawling of conversational keyword "Penundaan Pemilu" ((Election Postponement issue)	Social Network Analysis of the Crawled

Fig. 3. Research Process. Source: Processed by Researchers

From these previous studies, researchers took the gap, namely that there is still no research in the map that dissects the dynamics of opinion mobilization in the digital space on digital activism before and during mass action.

2 Method

The type of research used in this study is qualitative research. In this study, researchers used the Social Network Analysis approach as an analysis knife in retrieving and processing data taken from the source of conversations on social media Twitter. Social Network Analysis (SNA) is used to see important or central actors in the spread of Covid-19 information on social media Twitter [11].

The source of the data is taken from the results of scrawling Tweets on Twitter with the keyword "Postponement of Elections" on April 10–11, 2022. This date was chosen by taking the momentum ahead of the protest on April 11, 2022, with a total of 9,923 Tweets. The research process is carried out in two steps as shown in Fig. 3.

Meanwhile, the operationalization of research concepts as outlined in the Level of Analysis table can be seen in Table 1.

The first stage of data processing is crawling conversations on Twitter using the keyword "Election Delay" using Ncapture Software. At this stage, researchers filter out the proliferated tweets and remove irrelevant tweets.

Second step is an analysis on the social media conversation data which had been obtained in the first stage. This stage is the data processing stage. Data processing is carried out using Nvivo 12 Plus software. Data is processed into three levels, namely Network Structure, Issue Structure, and Actor [12]. Then, the processed results of this data are analyzed to answer the questions and research objectives.

3 Results

The phenomenon that occurred on Monday (11/4/2022) was related to the demonstration carried out by student elements in front of the Senayan capitol, colored by other issues and tragedies – both in real actions – and in narrative wars on social media.

Table 1. Level of Analysis

Level	Kind	Definition
Issues Network Structure	Social Network	Describing the communication network of the issue of "Postponement of Elections".
	Arguments used	Mapping the issues discussed in the discussion based on the grouping of arguments
Group	Cluster Analysis	Grouping of actors (social media username) and hashtag in a network
	Word Cloud	See a map of words that appear frequently in conversations
Actor	Betweenness Centrality	Actor who acts as an intermediary
	Closeness Centrality	Actor who is closest to other actors
	Degree Centrality	The most popular actor (has many links) with other actor

3.1 Actors on Election Postponement Issues

To see how the mobilization of public opinion in the digital space, researchers grouped actors in the issue of "Postponement of the Elections" by processing data related to twitter accounts with the most references. Because, the attitude of actors on social media spontaneously can be seen from what they upload on social media [13]. This movement is called the *digital Movement of Opinion* (DMO) which is interpreted as a movement to follow technological developments, especially new media in the form of social media by creating virtual networks between users with each other spontaneously by commenting on an existing problem [14].

The visualization of communication networks and the list of accounts with the highest references above have their respective roles in the issue of "Election Postponement", which will be illustrated in the table as shown in Fig. 4.

Username	Degree	Degree In	Degree Out	Betweenness	Closeness
GunRomli	1339	1339	0	17.538.838	0.001
NephiLaxmus	891	889	2	11.850.647	0.000
yunartowijaya	490	490	0	6.346.990	0.000
Badut2politik	417	417	0	4.869.170	0.001
RadioElshinta	353	353	0	4.810.656	0.000
ismailfahmi	333	333	0	4.311.714	0.000
CNNIndonesia	255	255	0	4.231.721	0.000
dharshinee_sk	203	203	0	2.732.946	0.000
VICE_ID	199	199	0	2.580.661	0.000
jokowi	436	436	0	8.019.246	0.001

Fig. 4. Dominant Actors on Election Postponement Issues

The Fig. 4 illustrates the 10 actors who dominated as *opinion leaders* in the debate on the issue of Postponement of Elections. Researchers group the dominance of actors based on the type of account, that is, actors from the Government there is an official account of President Joko Widodo @jokowi. Then, there is the account of a public figure @gunromli which belongs to a politician Mohamad Guntur Romli, an account of @ismailfahmi who an observer of digital media is. Then, there are also influencer accounts such as @yunartowijaya. There are also accounts without personal identities such as @NephiLaxmus, @Badut2politik, and @dhansinee_sk. Finally, several mass media accounts also enlivened such as @RadioElshinta accounts and @VICE_ID.

The components of the top opinion leader accounts are quite complete with various elements. From these accounts, one of the things that influenced the account to become the dominant actor was the presence of followers on each account which amounted to tens to hundreds of thousands of followers. Twitter's algorithm also supports tweets that get more and more likes, *retweets* and comments, the spread will be more massive. Thus, this algorithm supports accounts with large followers [15].

3.1.1 Election Postponement Network Issues

The study also shows how the public opinion wars that occur in the digital space that show indications of riding on each other and closing each other's narratives so that the narratives of mass action and demands voiced by various hashtags on social media are biased and drowned out.

Apart from being a mouthpiece for actors in disseminating their agendas, Twitter is an ideal place to monitor public sentiment. Twitter may be deformed into a "constituent service." That is, actors can easily connect with constituents and instantly read what they are voicing [16]. Spontaneity and co-creativity are one of the driving factors for the massive counter-narrative that occurs on Twitter and can potentially refract the main issue.

The narrative of demonstration and demands on social media ahead of and when D-day was disturbed by several issues other than the incident of mobbing a Lecturer at the University of Indonesia, Ade Armando. As a result of the tragedy, news pages and social media were distracted by discussing the beating case [17].

These narratives made a crowd and disrupted Twitter's social media space from April 10 to 11, 2022, with a total of 9,923 Tweets from Twitter users. Here is a visualization of communication networks with keywords "postponement of the election" (Fig. 5).

In the network, it is illustrated how communication in the issue of "postponement of elections" is built and shows several key *actors as opinion leaders,* such as twitter accounts @gunromli, @radioelshinta, @ismailfahmi, @badut2politik, to the account of President Jokowi @jokowi.

In its light, the above accounts became the epicenter in several topics of issues related to mass action and the discourse of postponing elections. Researchers then mapped out all the tweets based on the focus of the issues that were being echoed and herded on Twitter.

The result find that the conversation map of issues on Twitter leading up to and during the action is quite diverse. The dominant issue is still filled by conversations about 'government criticism and criticism of election delays' of 25.01%, as well as about
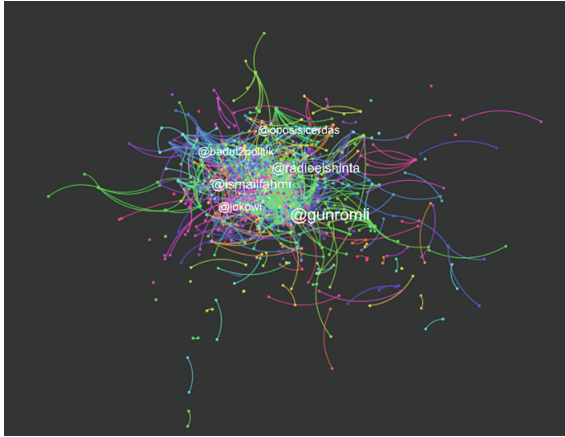
Fig. 5. Communication Network for the "postponement of the election"

'student action' and its demands for 20.56% of the total tweets. These two dominant issues are in line with the actions taken by student elements on real actions.

However, the issue of mass action and criticism of the postponement of the election did not stand alone. There are other issues that are opposed to the issue of mass action and issues that have a wedge. Opposing issues such as the issue of 'criticism of mass action' as many as 8.33% contained tweets criticizing the actions carried out by student elements.

In addition, there is also an issue that intersects but distracts the main issue, namely student action and its demands, namely the issue of 'beating Ade Armando'. The beating, which occurred shortly before the mass action broke up, was enough to seize the topic of the conversation on Twitter, which was 16.67%.

As for the intersecting issues, there is the topic 'Mentioning Jokowi' as much as 13.33%. The content of this topic is diverse, some criticize President Joko Widodo regarding the issue of postponing elections and other public issues, but there are also those who are pro-President Jokowi.

In addition, there is also the topic of the issue of 'Big Data and Postponement of Elections' as much as 8.89%, this issue departs from the statement of Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan who claimed that there were 110 million Indonesians who agreed to the postponed elections [18].

So, there is the topic category of 'impression' issues as much as 7.21% which is an achievement outside other topics. Impressions are filled by tweets of attacks or blasphemy between users and lead to allusions to party actors, politicians, influencer accounts and so on.

These categories then the researcher then reviews their content with the analysis of the word cloud or the word that most often appears.

Figure 6 shows that the word '*penundaan* (postpone)' and '*pemilu* (election)' being the most emerging because it is in harmony with the main issue being discussed. The words '*mahasiswa* (students)', '*aksi* (demonstration)', until '*tuntutan* (demands)' also appeared as a representation of a tweet discussing mass action by students.
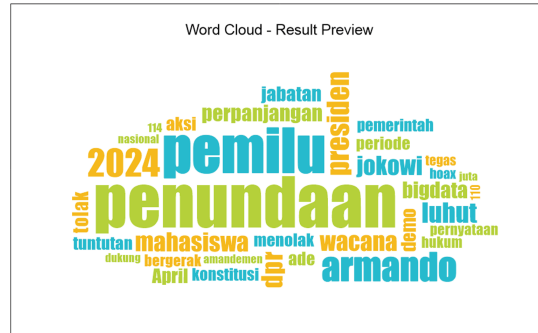
Fig. 6. Word Cloud conversation issue "Postponement of Elections" tweet

Almost entirely, the word that emerges is a representation of each categorization of the issues that the researcher analyzes; like the appearance of the word 'ade' and 'armando', the words 'bigdata', 'jokowi' and many more.

To dissect back and try to find something interesting in the conversation of the issue, researchers tried to look at how hashtag clouds can see a more dynamic map of opinion mobilization taking place.

The use of hashtags can describe the partiality of an opinion or a form of approval or rejection of an issue [19]. This can be seen from the most hashtags that appear such as #aksinasional114, #mahasiswabergerak (students move) and #aksi11april used by the action masses to campaign for their action demands. Meanwhile, there is also a hashtag #sayabersamajokowi that represents supporters of President Jokowi who are trying to counteract accusations that Jokowi is the actor behind the discourse of postponing elections (Fig. 7).

Then, the hashtag #adearmando also appeared quite massively with a discussion related to the tragedy of the beating of Ade Armando by the masses of action. This hashtag is also enough to distract the narrative of the masses of action and tweets of criticism of the issue of postponement of elections. Public opinion is led by the massive amount of

Fig. 7. *Hashtag Cloud* conversation issue "Postponement of Elections" tweet

information and news related to this event with a variety of narrative directions – from narratives of condemnation to even some who are pro against the event.

Interestingly, from the hashtags that distract the main issue of 'postponement of elections' is that the emergence of the narrative is still rooted in the account with the top references as previously explained.

In short, not all narratives about Ade Armando see the event neutrally, but there is an element of political partisanship between actors to accuse each other. The complexity of the debate on the topic of 'Ade Armando' further obscures the narratives of the action and its demands.

During the April 11, 2022 mass action, @jokowi account also appeared as an actor who carried the narrative of President Jokowi's attitude that refused to postpone the election. So that making #jokowi hashtag is also quite massive.

Then, another interesting thing about this opinion battle is the emergence of several hashtags that are closely related to politicians and political parties such as 1) #golkartegaspemilu2024; 2) #terimakasihmbakpuan; and 3) #demokratharapanrakyat. The appearance of these three hashtags indicates a debate on the issue of postponement of elections to improve the image of the party and politicians.

Meanwhile, Fig. 8 shows the grouping of hashtags based on the similarity of words in tweets. Most hashtags do not stand alone. This is an indication that each hashtag has its own agenda in its goal of mobilizing public opinion. As an illustration, the previous analyses that the researchers presented showed that each issue that emerged was a narrative and/or counter-narrative from another issue. Thus, each other distracts each other from each other's issues.

Twitter hashtags are used to label and organize tweets around a particular topic or theme. When a large number of Twitter users start using a specific hashtag to discuss

Fig. 8. *Hashtag Clustering* "Postponement of Elections"

a particular issue, it creates a clustering effect where all tweets containing that hashtag are grouped together, making it easy to track and follow the conversation.

Twitter's algorithm uses the frequency and popularity of the hashtag to determine which tweets are displayed in the top results. This means that if a particular hashtag is used frequently and by a large number of users, it is more likely to gain visibility and be featured prominently in search results.

As more and more people use a hashtag to discuss a particular issue, it can have a significant impact on the visibility and awareness of that issue. For example, a hashtag may be used to raise awareness about a social or political cause, to support a particular event or initiative, or to express solidarity with a community or group of people.

The clustering effect of Twitter hashtags can also create a sense of community and shared purpose among users who are all discussing the same issue. This can lead to the formation of online movements and campaigns, which can have a real-world impact and bring about change in society.

4   Conclusion

The discovery of key actors in debates and wars of opinion on the issue of postponement the election illustrates how opinion mobilization and mutual distraction of opinion occur on Twitter. The main actors in this debate were accounts with a large following, as a driving factor in making these accounts the opinion leaders of the issues discussed.

The discussion of issues on Twitter leading up to and during the action was quite diverse. The dominant issue is still filled by conversations about 'government criticism and criticism of election delays' and about 'student action' and its demands. These two dominant issues are in line with the actions taken by student elements on real actions.

However, this issue does not run alone. There are other issues that are being led to each other and affecting the narrative on Twitter. For example, the issue of Ade Armando's beating when an action occurred was enough to grab the public's attention on Twitter and media reports. This issue greatly distracts the main issue and directs public opinion to other things such as linking it with the labeling of 'kadrun', to politician actors, to some who are pro-beatings whose alleged persons are from intruders. The incident that occurred at the end of this mass action then *blurted* the main issue of student demands on Twitter.

In addition, the counter-narrative of opinion is also widely constructed by actors on Twitter such as one of them is political parties and politicians related to allegations of discourse on postponement of elections.

The mobilization of opinion on the issue of postponement of elections is quite complex and not directed because each actor or party has their own interests in this issue and is trying to win public opinion.

From this research, we can understanding the role of social media in collective action: Research has shown that social media platforms like Twitter can play a crucial role in mobilizing public opinion and facilitating collective action. This research has helped to expand our understanding of how social movements and protests emerge and gain momentum, and how online and offline activism are interconnected.

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