
Digital Activism in the Petition "Return Donor Money": A Phenomenological Study of Muslim Activists in Bogor, Indonesia

Elis Teti Rusmiati*¹, Yunita Sari², Derysmono³, Sunarto⁴, Edin M. Utoh Talum⁵

^{1,2} Prof. Dr. Moestopo University Jakarta, Indonesia

³ STAI, Dirosat Islamiyah Al-Hikmah Jakarta, Indonesia

⁴ PTIQ University Jakarta, Indonesia

⁵ Ma'had Rahmanie Al Arabie al Islamie, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the lived experiences and meanings constructed by Muslim activists in Bogor Regency in relation to digital activism through the online petition "Return Donor Money." The study addresses the limited attention given to the subjective, emotional, and faith-based dimensions of local Muslim participation in digital activism, particularly when online mobilization is connected to issues of transparency, accountability, and Islamic social solidarity. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, this research draws on semi-structured in-depth interviews with five participants, consisting of mosque activists, a humanitarian volunteer, a blogger, an NGO activist, and a local religious leader. The data were analyzed through Moustakas' phenomenological procedures, including epoche, horizontalization, clustering of meanings, and thematic interpretation, supported by observation and social media monitoring. The findings show that the petition functioned not only as a digital instrument for demanding financial accountability but also as a moral space for expressing concern, strengthening collective identity, and mobilizing solidarity among Muslim communities. Participants interpreted their involvement as non-violent resistance, ethical advocacy, and an effort to protect the value of *ta'āwun* within Islamic philanthropy. However, the study also reveals tensions related to misinformation, public skepticism, echo chambers, digital inequality, and digital dualism between online and offline identities. The study contributes to digital activism and Islamic communication scholarship by demonstrating that online petitions may operate as telepresence, enabling Muslim activists to transform moral awareness into collective advocacy and social change.

*Correspondence Author:

Elis Teti Rusmiati, Prof. Dr. Moestopo University Jakarta, elistr@dsn.moestopo.ac.id

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of the digital technology explosion plays an important role in spreading understanding, organizing movements, and even calling for widespread boycotts. Ismail, Munsir, & Hans (2019) state that the collective actions emerging on social media reflect the modern society's choice to use digital spaces as a means of activism. Nursyifa (2022) reported on the activism movements #blacklivesmatter or #savepalestine, both hashtags signify support from social media users to the victims and those affected by the war in the Islamic region. Not stopping there, the digital activism movement also influences the character of millennials and Gen Z in Indonesia. One example is in 2020 when BEM UI criticized the government for many policies that deviated from regulations, proving that social media can also be a positive space for expressing criticism and solutions.

Likewise, the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) social movement, which is a humanitarian effort to support the Palestinian people (CNN, 2023). The BDS campaign supports Palestinian rights and the enforcement of international law through several measures, including boycotting Israeli products or those connected to the country (McMahon, 2014). In Indonesia, this digital activism has successfully attracted public attention and caused an impact, such as the emergence of conflicts between supporter groups, neutral groups, and groups opposing the boycott action. According to a Jakpat survey, Generation Z is the group most concerned about boycotting pro-Israel products compared to other age groups. Databoks reported that 73% of respondents from Generation Z not only care but are also the most active in boycotting (Jelita & Akhirul, 2024).

The triggers of digital activism are more directed at unethical societal behaviors manifested in conflicts or verbal attacks that become the focus of public attention, which (Castell, 2009) refers to as violence discourse. This forces the state to create numerous regulations and counter-violence discourse activities through continuous public dialogues. How important public activism is in curbing all forms of agitation and unpleasant behavior that are currently becoming increasingly uncontrollable, infiltrating every aspect of life through social media. The site that was originally created to integrate relationships and harmony among the people of the earth has transformed into a weapon for production as well as consumption, dissemination, and publication of cruel (demonic) messages, killing moral values, tolerance, and humanity.

Haenschen (2016) states that the widespread use of the internet offers real potential to enhance movements and public participation, both socially and politically, through the dissemination of "digital warnings" on an issue or social reality. Communities, associations, confederations, or political groups mobilize their network members to act, move, or even vote by tagging them in status updates, such as on Facebook. Glenn A. Bowen & Chojnacki (2017) also state that by relying on the capabilities of social media, netizens often strengthen participation or mobilization to support or undermine someone or another group on an ongoing issue considered important. Gordon (2014) in his study showed a substantial increase in the number of participants in online activism compared to offline activism. Subsequent findings indicate that digital media potentially generate remarkable increases in community participation or movements and strengthen bonds of interest. (public interest). This phenomenon reflects that society still cares and can remain digitally connected with one another, as a democratic attitude. Social media movements that emerged in Indonesia in 2009, titled "Support for Mrs. Prita Mulyasari," "@ksi Warga," "SaveKPK," "Cicak versus Buaya," and even abroad, a report from (Aljazeera, 2011) stated that the fall of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak began with social movements through Facebook and Twitter, "Arab Spring," a digital revolution in the Arab region, in Hong Kong there was a mass movement called "Umbrella Movement," in Malaysia there is the "Bersih Movement," a political reform movement, and others (Lim, 2017).

In addition, digital activism that is always present highlights and sway's public opinion on important issues in Indonesia, such as the 2019 and 2024 Presidential Elections (Pilpres), and the Regional Leader Elections (pilkada), namely through buzzers. Buzzers like Go-viral and Sociobuzzer, which are accounts with millions of paid or free followers that always stir up every situation in society, are very influential and always become trending topics that are often covered by mainstream media as news. Initially, buzzers used social media as promoters of commercial goods when social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter did not yet have features for advertising. The career ladder for buzzers is divided according to the quality of engagement (retweets, likes, komentar). Meanwhile, in

the political world, buzzers work for two purposes: framing and amplifying certain political issues according to the interests of political parties, political figures, or personal ideologies, regardless of whether their opinions are controversial or aimed at building harmony (Tirto.id, 2017)

In contrast to buzzer activism, Prianda (2019) state that there is local and progressive activism, namely Masdjo (Masyarakat Digital Jogjakarta), a group that serves as a rhythm setter in media such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs, and often holds forums to discuss ideas and public issues. This community does not aim to shape public opinion, but rather focuses on providing an active public space for involvement in jointly raised issues, in addition to discussing light topics typical of Yogyakarta society. Social media consists of websites and applications that allow users to create and share content as well as participate in social networks. In addition to Facebook and Twitter, popular social media sites include Instagram, Tumblr, LinkedIn, and Myspace. According to Guo, C., & Saxton (2014) hashtags are very important for advocacy groups to gather knowledge, disseminate information quickly, and mobilize people during advocacy campaigns. Additionally (Gordon, N, 2013) has noted that these technological features enhance the potential of social media to facilitate dialogue and create online communities. From the Muslim community itself, activism, or populist Islamic movements against hate speech on social media have already been carried out by mass organizations in Indonesia such as Muhammadiyah, NU, FPI, and others.

Mitu, B., & Vega (2014) defines a modern activist as someone who actively participates in various activities that have a positive impact on the community. Activism then becomes digital activism or also known as internet activism or e-activism when the internet is used for communication, campaigns, and/or mobilizing a social issue. So, in this study, the aim is to highlight digital activism on the petition 'Return the donors' money that has been donated to Agus' initiated by Rizky Pras on the online petition platform Change.org. The petition was created as a form of disappointment from the donors towards Agus, the victim of an acid attack by his colleague, Aji, because Agus scolded Aji.

From various previous studies, this topic is strengthened and proven by research results from global digital activism studies (Gordon, Bowen, Lim, Haenschen); studies of buzzers, framing, and political technology (Tirto.id, Jelita & Akhirul, Nursyifa); and studies of Islamic activism and local communities (Ismail, Prianda, Nahdlatul Ulama/Muhammadiyah). These three perspectives demonstrate that the study of digital activism requires a multi-dimensional approach. Global studies contribute macro-level theoretical and methodological frameworks; research on buzzers and framing raises awareness of power dynamics and message mediation; and local Islamic studies provide contextual understanding of the values and actors involved. However, a gap emerges when these studies fail to accommodate a phenomenological approach that explores the subjective meanings of the activists themselves, especially when digital activism becomes an expression of faith, moral discontent, and the collective identity of local Muslim communities. Therefore, a phenomenological study of Muslim activists in Bogor offers an original contribution in bridging this gap, bringing forth bottom-up voices, spiritual experiences, and local dynamics within a digital activism landscape that is often dominated by macro and instrumental approaches.

Recent Indonesian Islamic studies also show that Muslim public action is often shaped by issues of accountability, legitimacy, and contested religious authority. In halal governance, public trust depends on transparency, accountability, and institutional verification, while in local religious conflict, authority may become contested when institutional and cultural interpretations of Islam compete for legitimacy (Sahhari et al., 2025; Mugni et al., 2025).

To date, no research has examined in depth the subjective experiences of Muslim activists involved in a specific petition case in Indonesia. While existing studies have explored broader trends in digital activism, Islamic movements, or online political dynamics, they often overlook the personal, emotional, and faith-based dimensions that shape how individual activists engage with digital platforms in localized contexts."

So, this study offers a new contribution to the discourse on digital activism by demonstrating that digital activism is not merely a tool for political mobilization, but also serves as a medium for expressing moral, spiritual, and social solidarity values within the context of the Indonesian Muslim community. This contribution becomes even more meaningful when analyzed through the following three perspectives telepresence, solidarity, and digital dualism.

METHOD

This study uses a phenomenological (Zahavi, 2019) approach to explore the meaning of mosque activists' digital engagement in Bogor Regency in the Agus-Noviyanthi donation conflict (2024). The following are the procedures of this research:

a. Data Collection Procedure

- Primary data were obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews so that five participants from Bogor Regency could narratively share their experiences, follow it:

Tabel. Characteristic of Partisipant

Age	Gender	Activity
24	Man	Humanitarian volunteer
28	Man	Mosque activist
30	Woman	Blogger
35	Man	NGO activist
40	Man	Local religious leader (Ustaz)

- Procedure in interviews were conducted both in person and through offline and online platforms (Zoom/WhatsApp Call) with a duration of 45 to 90 minutes.
- The instruments, the interview guide was designed with open-ended questions such as: "What did you feel when you first heard about the donation conflict between Agus and Noviyanti?" and "What was your experience in dealing with the issue of 'fairness' related to the donation?"
- Observation was conducted in the field at Mosque in Bogor Regency, where activists carried out activities, as well as monitoring social media activities of participants relevant to the case to strengthen data understanding.

b. Sampling Method.

Participants were selected using a purposive sampling method with clear inclusion criteria to ensure the depth of information: Being an activist in a mosque and Islamic organizations located in Bogor Regency; directly involved or intensively following the development of the 'Return Donors' Money' petition on Change.Org; having expressed opinions or taken digital actions related to this issue.

c. Data Analysis

Data analysis from five activists in Bogor Regency was conducted using Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological approach, starting with two steps: epoche (the researcher's neutral position), followed by horizontalization to identify significant statements, and then reducing them into clusters of meaning. The results of this analysis formed three main themes: the transformation of charitable deeds into transactional-legal actions, the perception of digital activism as performing good deeds and preventing evil, and concerns about declining social trust among the community. In essence, the situation of Agus-Noviyanthi is considered a 'Trust Crisis' that threatens the Islamic philanthropic ecosystem and disrupts the value of ta'awun (mutual assistance).

d. Research Ethics and Anonymity

In order to protect the integrity and safety of the participants:

- Informed consent, before conducting interviews, five participants are explained the purpose of the research and asked to sign a consent form.
- The confidentiality of five activists in Bogor Regency is protected through the use of pseudonyms and location adjustments related to their experiences in the Agus-Noviyanthi donation case. The data were analyzed using the IPA method: the researcher reread the interview transcripts (reading), made notes on language and emotions (initial noting), created codes (emergent themes), and connected them into central themes (connections). The process of bracketing was applied to ensure that the interpretation results were truly based on the objective life experiences of these four participants.

e. Data Validation (Validity)

To ensure the validity of the findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017), this study uses:

- Member checking, the researcher sent back summaries of interview results or draft analyses to the five participants to ensure that the researcher's interpretations matched what the participants intended.
- Source triangulation, comparing interview results among different mosque activists to observe the consistency of experience patterns.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Activism: A Non-Violent Resistance

(Hallward, M., & Shaver, 2012) explain that social movements or activism are non-violent actions and a face of resistance carried out collectively. Social movements are defined as networks of informal interactions among many individuals, groups, and organizations involved in political and cultural conflicts based on a shared collective identity. Similarly, (Staresinic, 2011) states that non-violent resistance emphasizes its definition on the use of non-violent tactics in the struggle to obtain freedom and their rights. Based on this definition of non-violent resistance activism, forms of protest that have become symbols of resistance have also developed on social media, known as digital activism, including approaches such as petitions, boycotts, signature campaigns, and others. (Robyn, K., Mallett, R, K., & Monteith, 2019) mention that the concept of digital or online activism has many forms, ranging from symbolic signals about a person's stance on politicized issues (for example, changing someone's social media profile picture) to more complex engagements (for example, writing detailed posts about social issues).

To create change in their community based on Bogen, et al (2019) digital activism is carried out in three main ways. *First*, it allows individuals to express their experiences and opinions, connecting them with collective goals.

Rayhan (2024) a Muslim activist from Cibinong, Bogor Regency, stated that the activity of spreading petitions is a form of desire for transparency, more than just an ordinary digital activity. He felt the misuse of public funds amounting to 1.5 million as a moral damage that undermined his theological understanding. This inner turmoil generated a strong hope that this collective movement could go beyond merely providing a deterrent effect but also become a learning experience that can reduce the impact of systemic dishonesty in his social environment.

Meanwhile, Cecep (2024) a Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) figure from Bogor Regency, stated that this incident is a crisis related to existence and a moral problem that disturbs his thoughts. He feels an internal conflict when witnessing aid recipients actually opposing the people who help them, an action he considers a form of ingratitude and a violation of spiritual responsibility. The support of 116 thousand signatures on the petition is also seen not merely as a number, but as a reflection of a shared anxiety spreading throughout the world.

Second, it allows online community members to provide support, organize activities, and challenge negative responses to their activities (Rudolfsdottir A.G. & Johannsdottir, 2018). One example is 'digilantism', where perceived norm violations (hate speech or defamation) are exposed and publicly approved. Irfan (2024) a leader of the Rawapanjang Muhammadiyah branch in Bogor Regency, stated that participation in this petition is an important call to fight against the injustice experienced by humanitarian organizations. As a Muslim and a citizen, he feels this moral crisis as more than just a legal issue, but also as a threat to the integrity of the community charity movement. The tension within him is evident through the need to protect social spaces from interventions that could worsen the situation, as well as the effort to restore the rightful claim to the remaining community funds of IDR 1.3 billion as a step to recover the ethical structure that was once disrupted. Meanwhile Khoirrunisa (2024) the community of Bogor Regency who monitor and follow the news of the Agus-Noviyanthi conflict on various social media accounts, stated that experiencing this donation turmoil as a painful inner shock that also triggers existential anger. The acid attack tragedy that befell the victim is considered a severe physical suffering, but the misappropriation of aid funds that followed the incident is felt as an emotional betrayal that crushes the sense of humanity and injures the space of empathy within them.

But, more importantly, it is to adopt a critical viewer stance to avoid getting caught up in

increasingly hot and wild news that goes everywhere, especially those that lead to personal attacks and are not part of the initial case, especially fanned by Agus's side who continuously attacks Noviyanthi's side. More than that, as a society that often donates to help others, we must continue to oversee this donation case until the end, so that a peaceful and non-ongoing resolution can be achieved (Schwarz, K.C. & Richey, 2019) state in this petition group that, in fact, it can not only raise awareness but also maintain activism. However, it has concerns and weaknesses like vigilantism (diginitalism) and can provoke inter-group reactions.

Third, social media allows people to engage others outside their online communities to collectively negotiate and spread a new shared reality Bogen, et al (2019). (Rayhan, 2024) an NU activist in Bogor Regency, explained that as part of society he felt the Agus-Noviyanthi conflict not only as a disagreement in the field of health, but also as a social event that shook the mind. He saw the clash between legal experts and the collective voice from various layers of society struggling for humanitarian values. Then Irfan (2024) a Muhammadiyah figure in Bogor Regency, suggested that through digital interaction on the Instagram account @pratiwinoviyanthi_real (22/10/2024), she experienced a shift in thinking when noticing discrepancies in the distribution of a donation fund of IDR 1.5 billion; where IDR 500 million was used for the family's personal needs, while medical recovery costs at Rumah Sakit Cipto Mangunkusumo (RSCM) only received IDR 900 thousand. He considered this a "decline in gratitude" that disturbed her ethical awareness, thereby prompting her to realize the importance of the role of religious leaders in maintaining the morality of society to prevent social division.

Interconnection and Interdependence

Sádaba Rodríguez (2019) states that the formation of digital activist communities cannot be isolated, as there are interaction and close integration between online and offline. It means that digital activism facilitates offline protests by publishing, advertising, and organizing the case widely. This means that mass protests can occur without formal structure. (misalnya serikat pekerja). In this digital era, humanity is witnessing the birth of a truly new form of interconnection and interdependence. Cecep (2024) a religious leader from NU in Bogor Regency, stated that through this petition, he felt a change in his awareness while engaging in activities at the basic level. The virtual world erased the boundaries between himself and figures like Denny Sumargo and Hotman Paris, creating a strong shared experience to support each other, pray, and debate for justice.

Khoirrunisa (2024) a resident of Bogor Regency, said that he views his digital activity as a process of the development of communication agency throughout life. He experiences large waves of protest and interconnectedness through the internet as an amazing intersubjective experience, where inner relationships between users merge into a large family circle driven by social concern. (Joyce, 2010) explains the bottom-up movement on social media algorithmically because in this digital era, most networks are constructed by modern cable infrastructure, such as fiber optics, which ensures fast internet connections and allows digital activism practices in various forms and variations to be carried out more freely. The community also has the potential to participate more in digital activism due to the accessibility of costs and the quality of internet connections available to them.

Negative Relationship: Optimistic Bias

Various studies on digital activism that only focus on technological aspects often fall into an overly optimistic view (optimistic bias), assuming social media as a vehicle that creates a democratic public sphere. However, the reality is that social media is also very vulnerable to manipulative practices, especially by parties interested in spreading hate speech, hoaxes, and negative prejudices. (prejudice). A real example in the case of the petition "Return the donors' money for Agus" shows that social media algorithms can play a role in forming conflicting groups, Agus's family and their lawyers vs. Noviyanthi with supporters from various segments of society. Irfan (2024) a figure from Muhammadiyah Kab, Bogor, explained that personally, he feels differences in perspective as a movement of the heart that requires ethical standards towards personal attacks. This experience in the virtual world stimulates his reflective awareness to act wisely and balanced, in order to maintain social harmony and prevent the disintegration of cultural and interfaith relationships.

Rayhan (2024) a Muslim activist in Bogor Regency, stated that as an activist, the informant felt

how Farhat Abbas exploited regional identity to gather support for Agus, whom he considered a controversy to public objectivity. Therefore, his involvement in creating a counter-narrative petition is an existential reaction to reduce confirmation bias, while also demonstrating his ethical commitment to protecting the digital space from the increasing personal attacks carried out by public figures.

Gehlbach, et al (2024) explains that when faced with evidence or facts that contradict their preferences, individuals will actively negate or vehemently reject that evidence, which hinders their potential and capacity to discover the truth. As a result, they only select and share the information they want, even if that information is biased and not necessarily true. Allcot and Getzkow in (Gunawan, 2018) also state that individuals tend to be defensive and spread information that aligns with their beliefs, even if it is not true. Thus, it can be said that in the case of the petition "Return the donors' money to Agus," there are parties who deliberately exhibit an optimistic bias by continuously making statements that do not align with the flow of the issue or case, hiding facts simply because they disagree with the arguments put forth by Noviyanthi and the public.

Inconsistency: Digital Divide, Echo Chamber, and Digital Dualism

Deursen, A. Van, & Dijk (2010) explain that the concept of 'digital divide' initially referred to differences in access to computers. However, with the rapid spread of the internet becoming the primary form of computing, the meaning of this term has evolved to encompass not only access to computers but also access and skills on the internet. In the context of the digital divide, online protests are neither negatively nor positively related. Three processes of the digital divide are viewed in the following aspects: (a) the digital divide, (b) the spiral of silence and echo chamber effect, and (c) digital dualism.

First, people who engage in online actions may be different from those who act offline. (Irfan, 2024) a Muhammadiyah figure in Bogor Regency, stated that although considered part of the baby boomer generation, he embraced their participation in observing Agus-Noviyanthi's petition as a form of self-actualization in cyberspace. Amid the online dynamics of the millennial and Gen Z generations, they interpreted their existence not as a provocateur, but as a mediator who brings calmness and wisdom amid digital polarization. Similarly, (Khoirunnisa, 2024) said a blogger from Bogor Regency stated that digital inequality as a cause of the public's lack of understanding, including misunderstandings occurring domestically regarding information transparency to the tendency of bias in discussions of track records by legal teams. This real experience raises awareness of their presence alongside their colleagues to use petitions as a tool for education, restoring dialogue spaces, and creating peaceful solutions amid divisions in the virtual world.

Second, relationships in online activism can occur if there are push and pull factors that align. But, if you feel different from the direction and thinking in activism, one way is to engage in a spiral of silence (Hendra, 2019) where people self-censor opinions they dislike, that do not align with their values or principles, or that are unpopular. Even if it is necessary to conform to the prevailing public opinion, in order not to be ostracized or attacked by those who disagree with him. Cecep (2024) a NU figure in Bogor Regency, stated that his participation in the flow of public opinion as a reflection of a heart aligned with many internet users in supporting Noviyanthi. In situations of uncertainty arising from the intensity of the online world, he consciously manages his attitude carefully, to maintain the authenticity of his intentions in upholding the truth without falling into blind support. Syarif (2024), an activist from Muhammadiyah Kab. Bogor, explained that the change in values in the humanitarian movement triggered by the ambiguity of information in this digital dynamic. The situation in the virtual world stimulated his existential awareness to reflect on sorting information, in order to maintain the objectivity of thinking while also protecting the public from the dangers of misleading information.

Hendra (2019) specifically explains the concept of the spiral of silence in social media, where many follow the flow of thought and actions of the public majority, whether positive or negative, extreme, or neutral, controversial, or aligned. Because, the separation into networks with different mindsets is suspected to cause online activism to become different. The characteristics of social media (such as the ease of unfriending) will be promoted and socially validated, which encourages the formation of monocultures. Sharing and empathy towards others can strengthen the worldview of society. However, heterogeneity of opinion (the opposite of an echo chamber) can also trigger collective action.

Third, digital dualism shows that people enact different personas online versus offline. A relatively anonymous online environment frees people from the worry of being positively evaluated and having their freedom of movement restricted because of their behavior. This condition can facilitate online activism without fear of social repercussions, as Tani-Yıldız (2025) referred to as online disinhibition. Irfan (2024) a Muhammadiyah figure in Bogor Regency, said that his participation in the petition as a starting point to overcome his tendency to be reserved. His great concern for this donation issue awakened a sense of life calling, creating a new courage in him to be active and express his opinions in the virtual world.

Rayhan (2024), a Muslim activist in Bogor Regency admits personally, he feels an inconsistent difference between his original polite nature and the way he expresses his emotions when involved in online discussions about the Agus-Novianthi case. He realizes that this experience is a spontaneous response to differences of opinion, which occurs without any internal drive to create destructive expressions of hatred. Wu, S., Lin, T., & Shih (2017) state that it is very likely if people have low self-control, low attachment, avoidant or anxious, or suffer from psychological stress. Misunderstandings and conflicts that are continuously and perpetually maintained, due to the element of online anonymity that relatively allows people to feel not always individually identifiable, they become deindividuated and, therefore, less responsive to all social norms. Anonymity in the donation case between Agus and Novianthi on social media has led some netizens to consistently educate, motivate, persuade, and even strongly oppose Agus's family's lawyer, Farhat Abbas, and his team, which may not be possible with their own group.

Positive Relationship: Intrapersonal Consistency and Interpersonal Mobilization

In activist practice, digital technology is not only seen to "speak more quickly and broadly" but also to "listen more attentively and deeply" digitally. Karpf (2018) explores this issue in his concept of "analytic activism," which looks more at how activists can transform the data scattered across the internet into valuable resources to renew the strategies and tactics that an organization can undertake. Saragih, Mansur, & Pambayun., (2023) explained that digital technology serves as an essential element in activism by enhancing reputation oversight, collaboration among various participants, collecting funds, and strategic messaging. It levels the playing field for organizations in terms of data availability while offering the public a dynamic platform to engage in discussions, arguments, and disagreements over fundamental topics, which ultimately influences the success of social movements.

Karpf (2018) stated that "analytic activism" makes use of online information to renew organizational approaches. Digital tools allow for managing reputation, coordinating movements, raising funds, recruiting, and conveying diverse messages to enhance public engagement. Cecep (2024), a NU figure in Bogor Regency, stated the fundraising of Rp1.5 billion for Agus Salim together with the students and his colleagues is a form of shared concern. He sees the digital space as a place for ethical observation to monitor information from the Pratiwi Novianthi foundation, as well as an arena for discussing the responsibility of using donations. Khoirrunisa (2024) a blogger and a resident of Bogor Regency who frequently follows news developments and the front of your page (fyp) related to the Agus-Novianthi case, said that the mental crisis from this major event as a starting point for uniting existence with the online community. Through Agus's fundraising petition, he felt the strengthening of social identity rooted in ethical awareness and engagement; a heartfelt call to uphold justice and build brotherhood amidst an unbalanced situation.

Joyce (2010) said that digital activism is linked to offline activities through personal and social processes, as demonstrated by Novianthi's practical involvement and Denny Sumargo's contributions to podcasts. Motivated by a sense of unity, compassion, and ethics, this engagement changes after disputes, evident in Agus's aggressive remarks in response to Novianthi's calls for financial accountability.

Digital Activism: The Pro and Contra Netizens

The phenomenon of digital activism in the petition "Return Donors' Money" spearheaded by Change.org is becoming increasingly evident phenomenologically. Pambayun & Saragih (2024) state that this phenomenon on social media can be viewed from two perspectives, namely the phenomenon

pointing outward (the pro and contra netizens) and the phenomenon from the perspective of the awareness of Muslim activists in Bogor Regency. According to (Beck, 2020) phenomenologically, it indeed focuses on the exploration of the meanings of various experiences, events, and statuses possessed by the participants. This study also seeks to explore awareness, personal experiences, and individual meanings of their everyday objects or events.

The dimension of consciousness, (Koch, 2019) states that consciousness is an individual's alertness to the realities in their environment, as well as cognitive events that include memory, thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations. Guertin (2019) states that this awareness has two aspects, namely:

First, awareness includes an understanding of stimuli from the surrounding environment. Muslim activists in Bogor Regency, as part of the millennial generation, consciously navigate the arrival of a new landscape, namely social media. Digitalization and automation have become the lifeblood of the activities that drive their daily lives. These Muslim activists, wherever they are, consciously witness various global events, including the viral case of the "Return Donor Money" petition caused by the feud between Agus (the recipient of donations and a victim of an acid attack by a coworker) and Noviyanthi (the fundraiser from the Humanitarian Care Foundation) who constructed online activism to accommodate the explosion of public reaction. Muslim activists, community leaders, and the public in Bogor are also consciously connected online through devices to submit petitions, comments, and various symbols as expressions of their support and opposition. The fact that the partisanship and resistance of Muslim activists have emerged through digital activism, conveying messages about abuse, bias, and injustice in the use of donations by the Agus family, which Noviyanthi demands to be transparent, was born from technology. This is the phenomenon of Muslim activists referred to (Schwab, 2016) as "being attached with gadget." Humans become entities that live-with-gadgets. (being-with-gadget). It is undeniable to Muslim activists, community leaders, and the people of Bogor Regency that the case of the petition on social media is so deeply embedded in the fabric of their lives. Digital activism regarding the "Return Donors' Money" petition routinely crosses their devices without pause through messages on WhatsApp, statuses on Facebook, tweets on Twitter, photo uploads on Instagram, and videos on YouTube.

Al-Ghazali dalam Amiruddin (2015) states that self-awareness in the Qur'an means discovering the self by bringing forth the innate and internal potentials that exist within one's being and understanding by embodying the essences of one's existence, namely as the vicegerent of Allah St. As Allah Swt says in QS. Al-Hashr verse 19, "*And do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves. They are the disobedient.*"

Second, consciousness also includes the recognition of oneself (to exist), in one's own mental events, such as thoughts triggered by memory and by personal awareness of one's identity. Muslim activists in Bogor Regency, in their awareness, are following the petition "Return the Donor's Money" and are striving for "being-there" or being present and always being-in-the-world). Likewise, their presence in paying attention to the case referred to by the community as "a good deed met with a bad deed" is a manifestation of their continuous 'existence-observing petition cases on social media' since they realized their existence, being present to provide attention and empathy to this humanitarian case in the virtual world. As explained by Heidegger (1996), it is referred to as "dasein" which possesses "possibility" (seinkönnen) and "distinctiveness". Dasein is always related to certain ways, ways of being, and ways of becoming itself, to become itself. Das sein strives to understand itself (always understanding itself), which is what is called the way of being.

Based on the initial review, the relationship of Muslim activists who care about the fundraising case for Agus with social media propositions that can be drawn among them: care and empathy provide a path for these Muslim activists to strengthen their existence as "technologically human" so as not to make them humans enslaved by technology and numb to the issues within it. Awareness of existence as a Muslim in engaging with others to resolve issues related to the use of donations. Syahrir et al (2026) explains that human awareness of technology is defined as knowing and being able to express the impact of a behavior in the technological world, as well as knowing and being able to express various solutions. Therefore, the digital activism that emerged because of this petition, according to Muslim activists, community leaders, and the public watching in Bogor Regency, should be recognized as a phenomenon that must be interpreted with common sense, filtered first, so as to find true understanding. (Heidegger,

1996) states that this true awareness arises because humans have subjective thinking, meaning that subjectivity is not an antonym of objectivity. The subject in question refers to the meaning of "I" within humans who desire, act, and understand. Humans come into the world as subjects with self-awareness, not merely as objects in this world, but as subjects who think, reflect, and act critically and freely.

(Amiruddin, 2015) states in His word, Allah Swt always invites humans to maximize their rational abilities to understand His greatness and majesty, "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day are signs for those of understanding." (QS. Ali Imran: 190) Human consciousness originates from the thinking process processed by the heart (*qalbu*) and the mind. The heart (*qalbu*) and the brain continuously communicate with each other in a two-way dialogue, influencing each other's functions.

The Perspective of the Awareness of Muslim Activists

Digital activism reflects the behavior of audiences who were previously passive becoming increasingly active, giving them easy access to choose what they are looking for. Salsabela (2021) states that audiences, who are now active members of this media ecosystem, play an important role in shaping, participating in, and interacting with news and other media content. Related to the experiences and representations of Muslim activists and community leaders in Bogor Regency who participated in and followed the "Return Donor Money" petition event in the digital world, which (Bickle, J. T., Hirudayaraj, M., & Doyle, 2019) described as a global phenomenon of 'telepresence', meaning a way to feel present in a digital space in the form of digital representation. And, according to (Lim, 2018) human activities amid their digital footprints in the digital world can be broadly classified into two types of human footprints, including data-based 'digital identity' and socio-culturally driven 'online self.'

More specifically, from several confessions of Muslim activists, community leaders, and the public in Bogor Regency, in accordance with their experiences and awareness, whether as people involved in the "Return Donatior's Money" petition or merely observing on social media, they express it as a form of concern, empathy, and building self-esteem as human beings, especially as Muslims. (Grijdanus, Hedy, 2020) reported in their study that in the digital world, an individual's self-esteem will be influenced by their behavior, while that individual's behavior will be influenced differently by their representation in the digital world. An individual's self-representation in the digital world can influence the behavior of other individuals, in addition to self-concept and self-esteem. This means that Muslim activists are showing intense and serious reactions and expressions in protest against Agus's return of the donation to Noviyanthi, the owner of the *Peduli Kemanusiaan* Foundation, as a form of 'true self' rather than 'actual self' on the internet. One of the confessions made by Muslim activists is that their responses and statements are not made instantly and without consideration; on the contrary, they strive to consider various aspects of the issues and news that may arise related to the donation petition.

However, Muslim activists also realize that these expressions and reactions reflect different identities in the digital and physical worlds. The courage to make loud or harsh comments in the virtual world is very different from asking for opinions in the real world. (Salsabela, 2021) state that when someone identifies and realizes their self-identity in the digital world, a coherent process that refers to oneself and one's values can be influential. When related to Islam, the digital activism carried out by Muslim activists can be seen as a distinctive form of identity, because as Muslims, they strive to be grounded in human life within society in the form of values, principles, and culture. What needs to be maintained is that when Muslim activists move and establish their role as an identity manifested in culture and tradition, it is aimed not to become exclusive. This is found in the Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Mumtahanah Verse 8, "*Allah does not forbid you from being good and just to those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who are just.*"

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the phenomenological study on digital activism in the "*Kembalikan Duit Donatur*" petition among Muslim activists in Bogor shows that digital platforms have become important tools for garnering support and advocating for social justice. Activists use social media to spread information, build solidarity, and raise public awareness about the issues they face.

This process not only strengthens community networks but also gives a voice to those affected. Through this petition, activists successfully created a space for effective dialogue and mobilization, although they still faced challenges such as resistance from certain parties. Awareness of the importance of transparency and accountability in fund management has become a focal point, reflecting the values of justice upheld by the Muslim community. Overall, digital activism in this context shows great potential to empower communities and drive positive social change.

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