

Diagnostic Framing in the Pandawara Group Social Movement: A Case Study on TikTok

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Abstract

This study explores the social movement of the Pandawara Group, focusing on their visual presentations and scripts to audiences on the social media platform TikTok. How does the Pandawara Group frame its social movement on TikTok, which focuses on environmental cleanliness? According to several studies, environmental influencers on Instagram often generate high levels of engagement among audiences, especially among younger demographics. To enrich previous research, the researcher added the social media platform TikTok to examine its influence on audience awareness. This study uses qualitative content analysis with a case study that systematically examines the textual, visual, and audio content of the Pandawara Group's posts on TikTok from January to December 2024. The selected Pandawara Group content in this study includes diagnostic frame posts. The Pandawara Group was chosen because of its clear and explicit goal of conveying messages about environmental cleanliness and river waste management. This study used the diagnostic framing theory developed by Benford and Snow to provide insight into the Pandawara Group content's role in identifying events, providing solutions, and motivating community involvement. This theory also offers a framework for analyzing social movements, enabling researchers to analyze the digital green campaign of the Pandawara Group and its impact on audience perceptions. Researchers argue that the Pandawara Group uses a multifaceted approach in using informative and visual content to engage and involve audiences in promoting environmental sustainability. The audience response reflected in this study largely includes admiration, inspiration, and support for environmental awareness and waste management.

Keywords: Social Movement, Green Campaign, TikTok, Pandawara Group, Diagnostic Framing

1. Introduction

On November 23, 2024, the Pandawara Group posted on TikTok: Should we clean up the river or the people? In less than two hours, two hidden cameras recorded five irresponsible people. These five people littered in the river.

In Indonesia, waste-related environmental problems, such as waste accumulation and environmental pollution caused by inadequate waste management, remain a serious issue. In response to this problem, various approaches have been taken to educate the public about waste management (Lestari et al., 2025). Three waste management programs, namely, Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, are part of a waste management campaign. However, littering is not an action that impacts the environment according to the community.

This approach is necessary to provide economic benefits, improve public health, ensure environmental safety, and influence public behavior (Kurniawati et al., 2023). Wind, waste disposal, and human negligence carry land-based waste to the ocean, causing 80% of marine debris to originate from land (Niaounakis, 2017). Indonesia is considered the largest source of plastic pollution in the world's oceans (Law et al., 2020). Furthermore, 46% of Indonesia's 70,000 rivers were recorded as heavily polluted in 2023 (Anggraeni, 2024).

According to Sari et al., plastic waste circulation has reached 9.9 g/person/day into the environment (Sari et al., 2022). In Jakarta, more than 5 trillion pieces of plastic float with a weight of more than 250,000 tons (Nizardo et al., 2021). This waste accumulation causes flooding in Jakarta, which impacts infrastructure and the economy (Vicaso et al., 2023). Then, 864 pieces of plastic waste were found daily along the KT river (East Flood Canal) in Semarang City (Sarminingsih et al., 2022). Then, 1.547 tons of plastic waste was dumped into the Cikapundung River, precisely in Bandung, in a one-year period (Rinasti et al., 2022).

These actions will become a medium for bacterial growth that will impact humans and the environment. Therefore, the Pandawara group aims to prevent dangerous situations

by educating the public about the dangers of environmental pollution. The Pandawara group conducts offline education and educates the public through the TikTok platform.

TikTok has given environmental activism a new dimension by becoming a driving force in spreading messages. For the public, TikTok has opened up various spaces for interaction in various forms and shapes. Through TikTok, virtual communities from various geographical locations can be built by connecting people with similar interests. TikTok users can connect with others using multimedia devices such as text, images, audio, and video.

According to Lestari in her research, TikTok social media is significant for its users (Lestari et al., 2025). In their research, Putri et al. stated that TikTok influences encouraging cleanliness behavior (Putri et al., 2024). Since 2022, Indonesia has become the second largest user after the United States, which has experienced an increase in active users with a total of 113 million people (Lestari et al., 2025). TikTok is also one of the platforms often used to disseminate positive messages that are beneficial and can influence the audience (Septiyani et al., 2024) and educational content (Zhahira & Mutiaz, 2023).

Rahyadi et al. stated that TikTok's involvement can influence the implementation of social movements (Rahyadi et al., 2025). Additionally, TikTok has cognitive, affective, and conative effects that provide information on social issues, particularly those related to the environment, which then stimulate emotional concern among its users (Putri et al., 2024). TikTok is also used as a strategic tool to introduce research findings to teenagers (Zhahira & Mutiaz, 2023). The TikTok platform has successfully motivated audiences to engage in social movements related to the environment (Aminulloh et al., 2024), as this social media platform has the potential to effectively spread messages (Septiyani et al., 2024). In 2023, the posts of the Pandawara group on TikTok contained elements of environmental education in the text (90.90%), images (93.47%), and audio (86.36%) (Lestari et al., 2025).

According to previous studies, evolution has been observed in various online practices. This study examines how the Pandawara group frames their social movement diagnostics on TikTok. This study will be examined using Benford and Snow's framing theory will

be used to examine how the Pandawara group frames its social movement on TikTok. The purpose of this study is to obtain preliminary findings regarding the use of diagnostic framing strategies.

2. Literature Review

2.1 TikTok as Social Media

Dolunay states in his writing that new media is a new concept that was introduced in the 1970s to researchers in the fields of social sciences, psychology, economics, and culture (Dolunay et al., 2017). This concept then evolved into the digital age and internet technology in the 1990s, and the emergence of social media in the 2000s as a communication platform in the 2000s. One example is TikTok, which has become a widely used social media platform (Rahyadi et al., 2025). Yang stated that TikTok was launched to inspire creativity and bring joy to its users (Yang, 2020). This is because the content on TikTok generally consists of comedy, education, social action, and other topics aimed at entertaining the public (Rahyadi et al., 2025).

Hautea et al. state in their paper that TikTok is capable of facilitating the formation of affective communities around important issues that share similar emotional responses (Hautea et al., 2021). Thus, TikTok is highly effective in the context of social movements. It is a social media platform that combines user-generated content with algorithm-based dissemination, making it highly effective for activism (Aminulloh et al., 2024). Furthermore, the dissemination of messages through TikTok is considered highly effective in increasing support for environmental issues (Literat & Kligler-Vilenchik, 2021).

2.2 Diagnostic Framing

Framing theory positions meaning and culture as important factors in creating and presenting social movements. Benford and Snow state that social movements can be successful if social actors can define problems and provide solutions (Benford & Snow, 2000). This is because, in the view of framing theory, social movements essentially refer to the process of forming and constructing events that emphasize culture. Individual or

group understanding in framing theory emphasizes problems. This is because issues or events in the framing theory do not exist in a vacuum.

Framing is the process by which social actors interpret, understand, and disseminate their understanding of events (Benford & Snow, 2000). Benford and Snow emphasize that framing theory has three core forms: diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing. Diagnostic framing emphasizes the description of the causes of an issue or problem and describes who is responsible for the problem. Then, prognostic framing examines the solutions taken to resolve the issue. Motivational framing is used to motivate and encourage TikTok users to participate in the social movement. However, this study focuses on diagnostic framing. Framing theory also emphasizes the importance of message framing.

2.3 Social Movement

A social movement is an action that involves its participants in a collective effort to encourage social change (Zeller, 2022). Martinez-Alier et al. state in their writing that in resisting waste disposal, the community must participate to maintain environmental sustainability (Martinez-Alier et al., 2016). Social movements that focus on the environment generally consist of several people who form a community. Then, the community will raise public awareness of environmental protection through social movements using social media. Social movements can influence the public to participate in environmental conservation through the power of the media (Hansen, 2018).

3. Method

This study uses content analysis based on the Pandawara group's posts on TikTok. The diagnostic framing strategies used to describe environmental problems or issues will be examined. The data collection period was from January to December 2024, which enabled comprehensive analysis.

Data were collected from June to July 2025, after which the data were imported into Nvivo 12 Plus for analysis. The researcher will enter the dataset into Nvivo 12 Plus by mapping it into several patterns. Then, extract those units, and posts that are not related

to diagnostic framing will be excluded. This process resulted in the analysis of 55 of 105 posts.

4. Framework

This study uses an inductive approach to analyze the Pandawara Group posts to answer the research questions. Social movements will be examined to identify diagnostic frames that emerged over a year from the videos posted by the Pandawara Group on TikTok. Therefore, after conducting initial data exploration, the researcher will then perform a coding scheme to capture the details of diagnostic framing in social movements carried out by the Pandawara group. The coding scheme will be repeatedly refined to ensure consistency with the research questions and methodology.

In this study, the diagnostic framing to be coded is about the Pandawara group's social movement, which highlights littering's environmental damage and its social and economic impact on the community.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Polluted River

The Pandawara group is one of the social actors promoting social movements through the social media platform TikTok. The social movement led by Pandawara is known for its efforts in environmental cleanup and often volunteers to clean up trash in several rivers in Indonesia. One of the goals of the Pandawara social movement is to raise awareness and educate the public on environmental management. In October 2022, Pandawara began uploading various content on the platform. The uploaded social movement content contained activities related to the removal of river trash. The content uploaded on TikTok aimed to raise public awareness that the environment is a shared responsibility and duty in society (Aminulloh et al., 2024).

Figure 1 Framing of a Polluted River

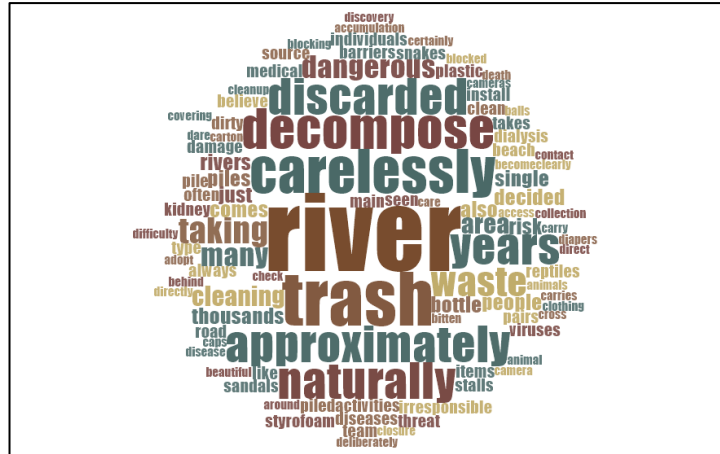


Figure 1 shows that the Pandawara Group, in its social movement, identified that the waste in various rivers in Indonesia, which causes river pollution, is a crucial issue at present. The Pandawara Group frames the causes of a problem within this framework as a social movement actor (Benford & Snow, 2000). This framing relates to the causes of a problem and examines the factors responsible for its occurrence. Pandawara raises public awareness of environmental issues, particularly waste in rivers, which can create social problems.

Through its social movements, the Pandawara Group can emotionally establish collective epistemic authority in terms of content. They can create emotional bonds and social interactions within the community. This enables audiences to accept knowledge related to the issues identified by the Pandawara Group. Moreover, through social movements carried out by the Pandawara Group, the community as a whole is the party responsible for this issue. Therefore, the Pandawara Group often invites the community to clean up the environment together (Lestari et al., 2025).

In their social movements, they often document their activities while cleaning up trash in rivers and educating the public about the impact of their actions. In videos posted on TikTok, the Pandawara Group often shows trash piling up in polluted rivers, as well as social movements themed "action" to clean up the environment. They used time-lapse video techniques to demonstrate the cleaning process from start to finish.

5.2 Causes of Environmental Damage

Figure 2 Causes of Environmental Damage



Figure 2 shows the diagnostic framing of the Pandawara Group in its social movement by presenting littering as a problem that causes environmental damage. In this frame, the actors of the social movement not only define who is at fault but also provide solutions to solve the problem (Benford & Snow, 2000). Overall, the social movement in the Pandawara Group's digital green campaign against diagnostic framing not only identifies the habit of littering that is often done but also links it to the impacts that arise as drivers of social problems, so that the proposed solutions have a greater impact. Pandawara Group strives to engage the general public and encourage meaningful changes in attitudes and behavior by taking an educational approach to environmental cleanliness, tackling the challenge of cleaning up river waste, providing cleaning equipment, being willing to be invited to address environmental issues, and using surveillance cameras at the points of the river they have adopted as a solution to environmental problems.

The Pandawara Group accepts environmental issues through its social movement on the TikTok platform. Clean up the area and provide educational approaches to the surrounding community to collectively maintain environmental cleanliness. The Pandawara Group then targets four stakeholders in addressing these environmental issues: individuals, the government, the media, and businesses. Their focus is on social change in line with the goals of the digital green campaign to change the attitudes, awareness, and behavior of the community, especially the younger generation, in maintaining the cleanliness of rivers (Lestari et al., 2025).

The comments on their TikTok videos are generally very supportive. Many viewers appreciate their dedication and efforts. "You are examples of creative, productive, and inspiring young people," wrote one viewer on TikTok. To increase the effectiveness of their social movement, viewers also offer advice. In addition, many viewers gave advice to other viewers in the comments section, such as "our job is just not to litter," and "in my opinion, Pandawara has sacrificed a lot for the environment, so now our job is to reduce the use of plastic bags to help them," which is usually followed by lengthy discussions in the comments section.

Figure 3 Diagnostic Framing



Figure 3 shows how the Pandawara Group uses diagnostic framing to engage the public and encourage them to contribute to social movements. Social movement actors can create vocabulary to entice the public to get involved and contribute to the issues raised by social movements (Benford & Snow, 2000). Within this framework, the Pandawara Group uses terms such as "environment," "community," "let's," and conveys their commitment to fostering a sense of unity in caring for the environment.

The Pandawara Group's collaborative approach shows that they have succeeded in mobilizing the community and causing real environmental change online (Aminulloh et al., 2024). The Pandawara Group's digital green campaign social movement has earned various awards and, more importantly, inspired the younger generation to take responsibility for the environment through its unwavering commitment (Aminulloh et al., 2024). Furthermore, researchers will highlight the positive results achieved by the social movement of the Pandawara Group in its digital green campaign.

5.3 The Success of Pandawara Group

The success of the social movement of the Pandawara Group is an example of a community that uses digital platforms to inspire the younger generation and drive real environmental change (Aminulloh et al., 2024).

Figure 4 The Success of Pandawara Group

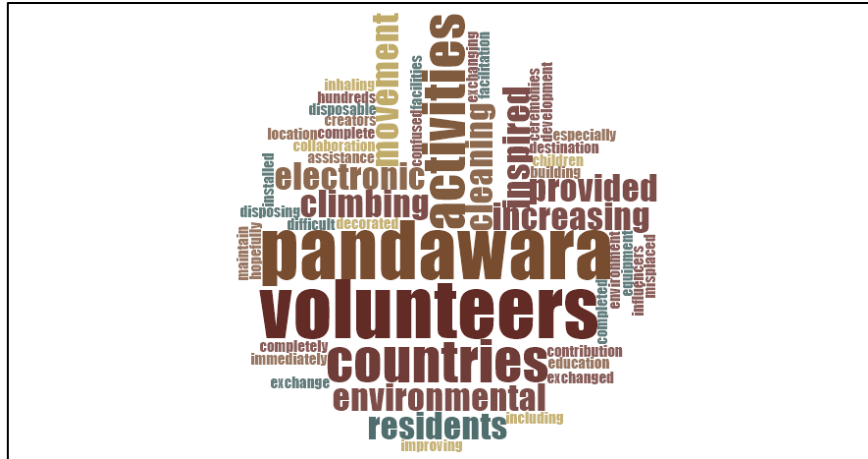


Figure 4 shows the positive impact of social movements in the Pandawara Group's digital green campaign. This is a manifestation of their success in changing how society views and manages waste. They could create the right frame so that people who previously did not contribute finally felt they had a stake in the issue being promoted. This agrees with the statement that the success of a social movement depends on how actors define the problem, the solution to the problem, and their motivation (Benford & Snow, 2000).

Pandawara's social movement now promotes educational equality by building schools in remote areas. They have also succeeded in reducing environmental damage by removing hundreds of tons of waste from various rivers in Indonesia, such as the Cikeruh River, and the Citarum River in Bandung. This social movement also succeeded in raising public awareness of environmental cleanliness through its digital green campaign. As a result, many young people have followed their example and become active and concerned about the environment.

6. Conclusion

The results of the study show that the Pandawara Group's social movement in the digital green campaign can be achieved through diagnostic framing by examining the Pandawara Group's content on TikTok about the habit of littering as an obstacle and river environmental damage as a driver of social problems. The findings show that the Pandawara Group emphasizes diagnostic framing to perform social movements that reflect its goals of increasing awareness and collective inspiration. These social movements have had various positive impacts on people's lives, such as increasing public awareness, reducing environmental pollution, equalizing education, and emergence of several communities that are also concerned about the environment. They have also succeeded in gaining recognition and collaboration from various stakeholders. Therefore, the TikTok platform they use serves not only as a call to action but also to foster empathy and dialogue and raise public awareness of the importance of environmental protection.

7. Contributions, limitations, and suggestions

This study contributes to the literature by demonstrating how the theoretical framework developed by Snow and Benford can be used to examine social movements in digital green campaigns. This study provides insights into social movements in digital green campaigns and their importance in designing effective messages that can promote progressive agendas. Future research can overcome these limitations by examining the Pandawara group's messages on various social media and offline platforms to gain a more holistic view. The limitation of this study is that it only focuses on TikTok posts, which means that framing strategies on other platforms or offline activities can be overlooked.

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