

CLEANING UP THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT: A STUDY OF VIRTUAL ETHNOGRAPHY IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNITY OF MAKASSAR, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the use of social media as a virtual forum to discuss about the environmental cleanliness programmes in Makassar city, Indonesia. Utilising virtual ethnography, this study combines narrative analysis – to observe visual and textual narratives as a form of discussion – with face to face interviews to understand how communication patterns are formed virtually when discussing the topic. This study also aims to understand how the community members participated both in the real world (offline) and the virtual world (online). To understand this phenomena, communication components of virtual interaction are employed. This study concluded that the topic of conversation in the social media consists of two distinct topics: the main topics and the additional topics. The main topics were formulated and uploaded by the admin who were previously discussed in person between other admins and several community members. The main topic was uploaded in the social media group to get community members' responses, whereas the additional topics were uploaded and written by community members. The main topic is related to the city cleaning program initiated by the government of Makassar city. Some of the main topics were followed up with actions in the real reality by community members. Based on this analysis, there is no diametrical difference between real reality or phenomena that existed in the real world (offline) with the reality that existed in the real world (offline), in which the community members participated in the environmental cleanliness program.

Keywords: Virtual ethnography, social media, local environment, virtual community.