



Framing Analysis of #BoikotTrans7 News on Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School in the Xpose Uncensored Program Using the Pan and Kosicki Model

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the media framing of the #BoikotTrans7 controversy related to Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School in the Xpose Uncensored program broadcast by Trans7 and to examine public responses emerging through social media. The study employs a qualitative approach using a netnographic design combined with the framing analysis model developed by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki. Data were collected from Xpose Uncensored broadcasts and TikTok content using the hashtag #BoikotTrans7, including videos, captions, and user comments. Data analysis was conducted through four framing structures: syntactic, script, thematic, and rhetorical. The findings indicate that the television program framed pesantren life by emphasizing visual, symbolic, and sensational aspects, particularly those related to wealth, power relations, and traditions perceived as unique. However, the program provided limited contextual explanations regarding the educational, cultural, and spiritual values underlying these traditions. This framing generated diverse public interpretations and triggered widespread criticism on social media. The hashtag #BoikotTrans7 functioned not only as a medium for criticism but also as a form of digital activism capable of mobilizing collective solidarity among pesantren communities and the broader public.

[Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis framing media terhadap kontroversi #BoikotTrans7 yang berkaitan dengan Pondok Pesantren Lirboyo dalam program Xpose Uncensored yang ditayangkan oleh Trans7 serta mengkaji respons publik yang muncul melalui media sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain netnografi yang dipadukan dengan model analisis framing Zhongdang Pan dan Gerald M. Kosicki. Data diperoleh dari tayangan Xpose Uncensored dan konten TikTok yang menggunakan tagar #BoikotTrans7, meliputi video, caption, dan komentar pengguna. Analisis data dilakukan melalui empat struktur framing, yaitu sintaksis, skrip, tematik, dan retorik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa program televisi tersebut membingkai kehidupan pesantren dengan menonjolkan aspek visual, simbolik, dan sensasional, terutama yang berkaitan dengan kekayaan, relasi kekuasaan, serta tradisi yang dianggap unik. Namun, program tersebut memberikan sedikit penjelasan kontekstual mengenai nilai-nilai pendidikan, budaya, dan spiritual yang melatarbelakangi tradisi tersebut. Framing ini memunculkan beragam interpretasi publik dan memicu kritik yang luas di media sosial. Tagar #BoikotTrans7 berfungsi tidak hanya sebagai sarana kritik, tetapi juga sebagai bentuk aktivisme digital yang mampu memobilisasi solidaritas kolektif di kalangan komunitas pesantren maupun masyarakat luas.] © The Authors.

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1. Introduction

The #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon emerged as a public response to the *Xpose Uncensored* program, which discussed the lives of students at Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School. Many members of the pesantren and Nahdlatul Ulama communities considered the program's portrayal of pesantren life to be inaccurate and potentially misleading regarding the tradition of respect toward kyai [1, 2]. As a result, the hashtag #BoikotTrans7 became a widely discussed digital movement on social media.

The movement attracted significant public attention and sparked debates about media ethics in reporting religious institutions. It also demonstrated the solidarity of pesantren communities and highlighted the role of social media in expressing criticism, shaping public opinion, and exercising social control over media content [3, 4]. Similar to hashtags such as #ReformasiDikorupsi, #MeToo, and #BlackLivesMatter, #BoikotTrans7 illustrates how hashtags can mobilize collective action and influence public discourse [5].

As Islamic educational institutions, pesantren serve not only as centers of religious learning but also as places where moral and social values are developed. Pondok Pesantren Lirboyo, one of Indonesia's most influential pesantren, interprets media issues through the lens of Islamic values and religious morality. Therefore, examining students' responses to media broadcasts and boycott movements is important for understanding the relationship between religious values, pesantren culture, and contemporary digital media [6].

This research is significant because it examines the #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon within a pesantren environment, a perspective that remains underexplored in media studies. As active users of social media, santri are not only consumers of information but also potential contributors to public opinion in digital spaces. Therefore, analyzing #BoikotTrans7 news in the context of Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School can provide valuable insights into how pesantren communities interpret contemporary media issues.

The study is grounded in agenda-setting and framing theories, which explain how media influence public attention and shape interpretations of social reality [7]. In the pesantren context, these interpretations are likely influenced by religious values, pesantren culture, and scholarly authority. This research also has social relevance, as media boycott movements often generate public polarization. While some view boycotts as a form of moral accountability, others see them as a challenge to media freedom. Therefore, an objective analysis of #BoikotTrans7 reporting is needed to understand how the issue is constructed and received within pesantren communities. The findings are expected to contribute to studies of mass communication, digital media, and the relationship between pesantren culture and modern media.

Research on the #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon is still very limited, especially studies that examine how the media frames this issue in news reporting. Previous research by Lim, Abidin, Sarbini, & Iwan used a framing analysis or critical discourse analysis approach on different political, social, and religious issues, thus not providing an adequate depiction of the media's construction of the digital boycott phenomenon involving pesantren [8]. Rohalia & Bintarti's research on pesantren has so far mostly positioned pesantren as an object of media representation, not as part of the social context that influences the process of meaning-making regarding a media issue, research that integrates the study of broadcast media, digital social movements, and pesantren culture within a comprehensive mass communication analysis framework [9].

The novelty of this study lies in its integration of media framing analysis, digital boycott movements, and pesantren culture within a single mass communication framework. Using the Pan and Kosicki model, this research examines how the #BoikotTrans7 issue is framed and how pesantren are represented in media coverage. It also focuses on a contemporary phenomenon that has received limited academic attention and takes Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School as its research setting. The study is expected to contribute to the development of media framing, digital communication, and Islamic communication studies,

while enriching the literature on the relationship between media, digital social movements, and pesantren culture.

2. Method

This research used a qualitative approach with a netnography design combined with framing analysis. The qualitative approach is chosen because it aims to deeply understand the construction of meaning in media coverage as well as public responses in digital spaces. Meanwhile, netnography is used because this research utilizes data from social media, specifically TikTok, allowing the researcher to examine interactions, behaviors, and communication culture that develop within online communities [10]. The focus of this research is the coverage of Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School on the Xpose Uncensored program broadcast by Trans7 and the public's response to the coverage through the hashtag #BoikotTrans7 on the TikTok platform.

The study was conducted between December 2025 and January 2026 and focused on two units of analysis: the *Xpose Uncensored* program discussing the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School and TikTok content associated with the #BoikotTrans7 hashtag, including videos, captions, comments, and user interactions. These units were selected to examine both media representations and public interpretations of the issue in digital spaces. Primary data were collected from the full program broadcast and TikTok content related to #BoikotTrans7. Using purposive sampling, the study analyzed 30 highly engaged TikTok videos and 300 representative comments that directly discussed the program and the Lirboyo pesantren issue. Secondary data were obtained from journals, books, news articles, and other sources related to framing theory, mass communication, digital media, and digital activism.

Data collection was carried out through documentation and non-participant observation techniques. The researcher observed television broadcasts and social media user activities without directly engaging in the interactions that occurred. All obtained data were then documented, classified, and analyzed according to the research focus [11]. Data analysis was conducted using a framing model [12]. This model is used to identify how the media frames reality through four main structures, namely syntactic, script, thematic, and rhetorical. The syntactic structure focuses on the arrangement of facts and news sources. The script structure examines the completeness of news elements based on the 5W+1H principle. The thematic structure analyzes patterns of meaning arrangement, relationships between ideas, and emphasized themes. Meanwhile, the rhetorical structure analyzes the use of language, symbols, metaphors, images, and other visual elements in constructing certain meanings.

Table 1. Framing Structure of Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki's Model

Structure	Framing Device	Observed Indicators
Syntax	News structure pattern (news schema)	Arrangement of facts, selection of sources, sequence of information presentation, selection of visuals
Script	News presentation flow	Completeness of the 5W+1H elements (what, who, when, where, why, how)
Thematic	Organization of news content	Detail of information, coherence between paragraphs, sentence structure, use of pronouns, and the constructed theme and meaning
Rhetorical	Emphasis of news meaning	Lexical choices, metaphors, graphics, visuals, images, and style of presentation

In addition to framing analysis, TikTok data were coded to identify dominant themes, public sentiment toward Trans7 and Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School, forms of digital activism, representations of pesantren values, and patterns of audience interpretation. The coding process was conducted repeatedly to ensure the consistency of themes and findings. To ensure data validity, the study applied source and data triangulation by comparing findings from the *Xpose Uncensored* program, TikTok content, user comments,

and relevant literature. Repeated data verification was also carried out to maintain consistency, thereby enhancing the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the research findings [13].

3. Results

3.1 Public Sentiment and Digital Activism in #BoikotTrans7

The content analysis of the #BoikotTrans7 hashtag indicates that public sentiment was predominantly negative toward the *Xpose Uncensored* program that discussed the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School. Most social media users, particularly on TikTok, believed that the report failed to provide a comprehensive context of the boarding school's traditions and culture, potentially leading to public misunderstanding. Criticism mainly focused on the media's portrayal of the relationship between students and kyai, the traditions of respect within the boarding school environment, and the narrative that was considered insufficiently sensitive to the religious and cultural values of the pesantren. These findings demonstrate the public's strong concern regarding the representation of Islamic educational institutions in the mass media, as pesantren are viewed not only as centers of religious education but also as institutions that play a vital role in shaping character, morality, and social values within society.



Figure 1. Content that uses the hashtag #BoikotTrans7

The content analysis reveals that #BoikotTrans7 functioned as a tool for mobilizing public opinion and fostering collective solidarity among communities connected to the pesantren tradition. Through the use of a common hashtag, social media users built communication networks that facilitated the spread of information, strengthened shared opinions, and reinforced group identity. Various forms of digital activism emerged, including resharing content, creating response videos, promoting counter-narratives, and encouraging boycotts of programs perceived as harmful to the image of pesantren. These activities demonstrate that audiences are no longer passive consumers of media content but active participants who can evaluate, criticize, and influence public discourse.

The findings also indicate that public sentiment was driven less by rejection of the media itself and more by a desire for fair and balanced representations of pesantren life.

Many users emphasized the importance of understanding pesantren traditions within the context of Islamic values, local culture, and the educational relationship between students and kyai. Overall, the #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon illustrates how social media can serve as an effective platform for digital activism, public participation, and social learning, while highlighting the importance of digital media literacy, critical thinking, and cultural understanding in responding to information responsibly.

3.2 Dominant Issues and Narrative Construction

The content analysis of the *Xpose Uncensored* program and posts using the #BoikotTrans7 hashtag identified several key issues that attracted significant public attention, particularly the representation of pesantren life, the relationship between santri and kiai, respect for religious authority, and the accuracy of media portrayals of pesantren culture. Many members of the public believed that the coverage did not fully reflect the realities and values of life at Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School. Using the Pan and Kosicki framing model, the analysis found that the news emphasized unique and symbolic aspects of pesantren life, highlighting certain traditions and activities while providing limited context regarding the cultural, educational, and religious values behind them. As a result, audiences often focused on visible practices rather than the broader educational processes that shape students' character, morality, and social development.

The study also found that public discussions surrounding #BoikotTrans7 generated strong counter-narratives aimed at explaining pesantren traditions within the framework of Islamic teachings, respect for teachers, and long-standing educational values. Many social media users argued that the relationship between santri and kiai represents an important process of character formation, discipline, responsibility, and respect for knowledge. In addition, the use of specific language, visuals, and editing styles in the news was perceived as influencing public perceptions of pesantren, encouraging users to create alternative narratives through videos, comments, and other digital content. Overall, the findings show that the phenomenon reflects not only criticism of media coverage but also a contestation of meaning between the media and the public in defining social reality. This highlights the powerful role of media framing in shaping public opinion and underscores the importance of media literacy, critical thinking, and contextual understanding when evaluating information about educational institutions.



Figure 2. A post that uses the hashtag #BoikotTrans7

Overall, the research findings reveal that the construction of narratives in news coverage about Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School is the main factor triggering the emergence of the digital movement #BoikotTrans7. Issues of pesantren representation, respect for religious leaders, and sensitivity to religious culture become central themes dominating public discussion. This phenomenon shows that the media not only functions as an information provider but also as an agent of social education that plays a role in shaping the public's perspective on reality. Therefore, news coverage regarding educational institutions, especially pesantren, needs to be conducted proportionally and contextually to support the formation of a more objective public understanding and strengthen the educational function in building character, tolerance, and media literacy in the digital era. As for the researcher's findings from screenshots, the researcher presents them below.

3.3 The Implications of Hashtag Movements on Media and Society

The findings indicate that the #BoikotTrans7 movement had significant implications for media institutions, society, and the educational sector. The hashtag became a form of digital public participation, allowing people to express criticism and evaluation of media content that they believed did not accurately represent the reality of pesantren life. As a result, social media emerged as an important public space where audiences actively contribute to discussions and the formation of public opinion.

For media institutions, the phenomenon demonstrates the increasing influence of audiences in monitoring and assessing journalistic products. Public reactions through social media function as a form of social control, encouraging the media to prioritize accuracy, balance, and cultural sensitivity in reporting. The findings suggest that coverage of pesantren is evaluated not only for its informational value but also for its ability to present educational, religious, and cultural contexts in a fair and comprehensive manner.

From an educational perspective, the #BoikotTrans7 movement highlights the importance of digital media literacy, critical thinking, and responsible information evaluation. The phenomenon shows how media can shape public perceptions of educational institutions, making it essential for individuals to analyze information critically. It also underscores the role of pesantren in promoting values such as respect, discipline, ethics, and appreciation of Islamic scholarship. Overall, the case illustrates the increasingly interconnected relationship between media, society, and education in the digital era.

4. Discussion

4.1 Public Sentiment and Digital Activism in #BoikotTrans7

Research results show that public sentiment expressed through the hashtag #BoikotTrans7 is predominantly negative toward the Xpose Uncensored program discussing the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School. This finding indicates that the public is highly sensitive to media representations of Islamic educational institutions, particularly when reporting concerns religious values, educational traditions, and cultural practices that are deeply rooted in society. Based on framing theory, media not only serves as a channel for conveying information but also shapes audience understanding through the selection, emphasis, and presentation of certain aspects of reality. In this case, many people perceived that the reporting highlighted particular aspects of pesantren life without sufficiently explaining the educational, cultural, and religious values underlying them, thereby creating the potential for misunderstandings regarding pesantren traditions and practices [14, 15].

The widespread use of the hashtag #BoikotTrans7 also demonstrates the growing role of social media as a digital public sphere where individuals collectively construct opinions, exchange information, and express criticism toward media institutions. This finding supports the view that digital media enables active participation, solidarity building, and the rapid dissemination of ideas through online communication networks [16]. Through social media, audiences are no longer limited to consuming information but can actively

engage in discussions and challenge dominant narratives. From a digital activism perspective, the emergence of response videos, content redistribution, and counter-narratives reflects the ability of the public to exercise social control over media institutions and advocate for values they consider important [17]. The hashtag itself functions not only as a discussion marker but also as a tool for mobilizing collective action and strengthening shared identity among users.

In the educational context, the debate surrounding #BoikotTrans7 extends beyond media issues and highlights fundamental values embedded within pesantren education. The relationship between santri and kiai, which became one of the central themes in public discussions, represents an important component of character formation that emphasizes respect, discipline, obedience, and moral development. Within the pesantren tradition, these values are transmitted not only through formal learning activities but also through daily interactions and exemplary conduct. This aligns with the argument that pesantren education is not solely concerned with the transfer of knowledge but also with the cultivation of character, ethics, and social responsibility through close educational relationships between teachers and students [18]. Consequently, media representations that do not provide adequate context may lead audiences to overlook the broader educational philosophy underlying pesantren practices.

Furthermore, the case underscores the importance of digital media literacy in contemporary society. The public's ability to analyze, evaluate, and respond critically to media content reflects increasing awareness in navigating information within the digital era. The active participation of users in commenting, sharing alternative perspectives, and providing contextual explanations demonstrates that audiences are becoming more critical consumers of media content. Social media also functions as a space for social learning where individuals exchange perspectives, negotiate meanings, and deepen their understanding of complex issues. This condition is consistent with the concept of media literacy, which emphasizes the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information effectively and responsibly [19, 20].

Overall, the findings suggest that digital media has transformed communication from a predominantly one-way process into a more participatory and interactive form. The #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon illustrates how public opinion can be shaped not only by mainstream media but also by collective discussions occurring within digital spaces. Therefore, media institutions are required to uphold principles of balance, accuracy, and cultural sensitivity in reporting, particularly when covering educational and religious institutions. At the same time, educational institutions should continue strengthening digital literacy among students and society to foster critical, objective, and responsible engagement with information in the digital age.

4.2 Dominant Issues and Narrative Construction

Research findings indicate that the dominant issues emerging in Xpose Uncensored reporting and public discussions through the hashtag #BoikotTrans7 revolve around the representation of pesantren life, the relationship between santri and kiai, and media accuracy in portraying pesantren culture. This phenomenon demonstrates that media not only delivers information but also constructs social reality and influences public understanding of particular social groups [21]. In this case, the reporting on Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School became a process of meaning-making that shaped public perceptions of pesantren life.

The study also found that the framing process, as explained in Pan and Kosicki's model, influenced public responses. Through syntactic, script, thematic, and rhetorical structures, the media emphasized certain aspects of pesantren life that were considered newsworthy. Consequently, some audiences perceived that the reporting focused more on symbolic practices within pesantren while providing limited explanation of their educational, cultural, and religious contexts. This finding supports framing theory, which argues that media selectively highlights particular facts while minimizing others [22].

Thematic analysis revealed that the news emphasized the hierarchical relationship between santri and kiai. However, pesantren communities developed counter-narratives, explaining that this relationship is an essential part of Islamic education focused on character building, respect, and moral development. This finding supports Nawawi's view that the kiai-santri relationship serves as a medium for transmitting knowledge, values, and exemplary behavior within the pesantren system [23, 24].

From an educational perspective, media representations significantly influence public understanding of Islamic educational institutions. Since pesantren function not only as centers of religious learning but also as institutions for character formation, incomplete contextual reporting may lead to partial public perceptions [25, 12]. Therefore, media have an important responsibility to present information that is accurate, balanced, and contextual.

The emergence of counter-narratives through #BoikotTrans7 also reflects growing public media literacy. Through comments, response videos, and alternative information sharing, audiences actively participated in interpreting and evaluating media content rather than merely receiving information passively [4]. This phenomenon further illustrates the shift from one-way mass communication toward participatory communication enabled by digital media.

Overall, the #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon highlights a broader debate concerning the representation of Islamic educational institutions in the media. Media framing influences public opinion, while digital media enables communities to construct alternative narratives that they consider more aligned with pesantren values and social realities. Consequently, media organizations should prioritize balance and cultural sensitivity, while educational institutions need to strengthen digital media literacy to support critical and responsible information consumption.

4.3 The Implications of Hashtag Movements on Media and Society

The research results indicate that the emergence of the hashtag #BoikotTrans7 is not only a digital communication phenomenon but also reflects changes in the relationship between the media, society, and the education sector in the digital era. This phenomenon shows that social media has developed into a public space that allows people to actively participate in monitoring, evaluating, and responding to the content produced by mass media. These findings align with the concept of the public sphere proposed by Ruudi, which explains that the public sphere is a discussion arena that allows citizens to express opinions and exercise control over various social institutions, including the media [26]. In the context of this research, the use of the hashtag #BoikotTrans7 indicates that social media has functioned as a digital public space that allows the public to express criticism of news coverage that is considered not to proportionally represent the life of pesantren.

Research findings also indicate that public responses to news coverage of the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School reflect an increasing critical awareness among the public regarding information disseminated by the media. This condition reinforces the view that modern audiences no longer act as passive message receivers, but instead as active parties in interpreting, evaluating, and even producing information. This aligns with Antojado's theory which states that individuals have the ability to construct meaning based on their experiences, values, and social backgrounds [27]. The reaction that emerged through the hashtag #BoikotTrans7 shows that the public does not simply accept the reality constructed by the media, but negotiates meaning based on their understanding of the culture and traditions of the pesantren.

From the perspective of mass communication, this phenomenon shows the strong influence of media framing in shaping public perception. According to Pratama, the media frames reality through the process of selecting facts, arranging narratives, and highlighting certain aspects considered important. When reporting on the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School is deemed to provide insufficient context regarding the educational and cultural values of the pesantren, the public then constructs an alternative narrative through social

media to provide a different interpretation [28]. These findings show that the framing process is no longer one-way because the audience has room to perform counter-framing through various digital platforms. Therefore, social media becomes an arena of contestation of meaning between the narratives built by the media and the interpretations developed by the public.

From an educational perspective, this research highlights the importance of digital media literacy as a competency that must be possessed by the younger generation, especially students and learners. The ability to understand, analyze, and critically evaluate information has become an essential need amidst the rapid flow of digital information. According to Yeleussiz & Qanay, media literacy is an individual's ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create messages in various forms of media [29]. The #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon shows that media literacy skills not only help individuals understand news content objectively, but also encourage the formation of critical awareness in responding to various social issues developing in the digital space.

Furthermore, this study shows that pesantren have a strategic position in the development of media literacy and character education. Public responses to the news about Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School indicate that the values developed in the pesantren environment, such as manners, respect for teachers, communication ethics, and appreciation for scholarly traditions, still have strong relevance in modern society. These findings are in line with the views of Pratama, et al., who stated that pesantren are educational institutions that not only function as centers for the transmission of Islamic knowledge but also as institutions that shape the character, morals, and social identity of students [30]. Therefore, when these values are considered to be poorly understood in media reporting, the public is prompted to provide clarification and defend the meaning they believe in.

The #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon also shows that social media can be utilized as a source of contextual learning in education. This case provides a concrete example of how public opinion is formed, how the media frames an event, and how society engages in digital participation to express aspirations and criticism. According to Wendland, the development of digital technology has given rise to a participatory culture that allows people not only to be consumers of information but also producers of information [31]. In the context of education, this phenomenon can be utilized as a learning medium to improve students' critical thinking skills, digital communication, and social awareness of various issues developing in society.

Overall, the research results show that the #BoikotTrans7 movement has broad implications for the media, society, and education. This phenomenon indicates that mass media is no longer the only party with authority in shaping social reality because society now has the ability to provide responses, criticisms, and alternative narratives through digital media. On the other hand, educational institutions have the responsibility to equip learners with media literacy skills, critical thinking, and digital communication ethics in order to understand information objectively and responsibly. Thus, the #BoikotTrans7 phenomenon becomes evidence that the relationship between media, society, and education is increasingly integrated in shaping a participatory and democratic communication culture in the digital era.

5. Conclusion

This study shows that the phenomenon #BoikotTrans7 is a form of digital activism that emerges as a public response to the reporting on Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School in the program Xpose Uncensored. Public sentiment, dominated by criticism of the representation of the boarding school, shows that society has a high level of concern about how the media frames the reality of Islamic educational institutions. Through social media, the public not only acts as information recipients but also as active actors capable of shaping opinions, spreading counter-narratives, and exercising social control over the media. These

findings indicate that social media has become a digital public space that strengthens public participation in the process of forming public discourse while also emphasizing the importance of digital media literacy to understand information critically and responsibly. The implications of this research indicate that the media need to prioritize the principles of accuracy, balance, and cultural sensitivity in reporting on educational institutions and religious communities. Meanwhile, educational institutions, especially Islamic boarding schools, need to strengthen media literacy education and critical thinking skills so that students can respond to information objectively. Nevertheless, this study still has limitations because it only focuses on one television program and social media data within a certain period, thus not reflecting the overall dynamics of public opinion across various digital platforms. Therefore, future research is recommended to use a more diverse approach, such as mixed methods or netnography, expand data sources to various social media, and examine more deeply the influence of digital activism on media literacy, character education, and public opinion formation in the digital era.

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