

# The Symbolic Convergence of Crowdfunding in Political Campaigns

## (Case Study: Netizen Discussions On Ridwan Kamil'S Facebook Fanpage)

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### ABSTRACT:

Internet plays an important role as a medium of political communication, including its power for funding political campaigns known as crowdfunding. The success of crowdfunding in several countries, then adopted by West Java volunteers to raise funding political campaigns for Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum in 2018 Governor Election. Socialization was carried out by uploading a video on title *Udunan Warga* (Funding from the Residents) which caused political discussion among virtual communities on Ridwan Kamil 's Facebook. The existence of virtual communities in discussing political fundraising campaign ideas has an important role in supporting crowdfunding success. The reason is virtual communities have a potential to discuss shared interests and are very likely to have shared group consciousness to support crowdfunding movements. This article aims to explain how the crowdfunding mechanism carried out by West Java Volunteers and how the process symbolic convergence of netizens related to raise funding political campaign on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook which presents shared group consciousness. This study uses a case study method and data collection techniques using online observation, interviews and documentation. The theory used was symbolic convergence which was popularized by Ernest Bormann to see the construction of shared consciousness among the netizens after seeing the video of *Udunan Warga* (Funding from the Residents). The results showed that (1) the crowdfunding mechanism carried out involved West Java volunteer as fundraisers, the site <https://jabarjuara.id> as intermediary platform and netizens as donors; (2) the process of crowdfunding symbolic convergence on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook took place in stages ranging from basic structure, message structure, dynamic structure, communicator structure, medium structure and evaluative structure. A rhetorical vision appeared in relation to the basic message, namely "*Dukung Udunan Warga Demi Jabar Juara*" (support crowdfunding for West Java become champions). Then rhetorical vision succeeded in raising shared group consciousness which not only supported crowdfunding at the discourse level but also donated their money for the campaign costs of Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum.

Keywords: *symbolic convergence, crowdfunding, virtual community*

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### ABSTRAK:

Saat ini internet memainkan peran penting sebagai media komunikasi politik termasuk kekuatannya untuk menggalang dana kampanye secara online yang dikenal dengan crowdfunding. Kesuksesan crowdfunding di beberapa negara kemudian diadopsi Relawan Jabar Juara untuk menggalang dana kampanye politik Ridwan Kamil dan Uu Ruzhanul Ulum pada pelaksanaan Pilkada 2018. Sosialisasi dilakukan dengan mengunggah video berjudul “Udunan Warga” sehingga menimbulkan perbincangan politik di kalangan komunitas virtual fanpage facebook Ridwan Kamil. Keberadaan komunitas virtual dalam memperbincangkan ide penggalangan dana kampanye memiliki peran penting dalam menunjang keberhasilan *crowdfunding*. Alasannya, komunitas virtual memiliki potensi untuk mendiskusikan kepentingan bersama serta sangat mungkin memiliki kesadaran kelompok bersama (*shared group consciousness*) untuk mendukung gerakan *crowdfunding*. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana mekanisme *crowdfunding* yang dilakukan Relawan Jabar Juara serta proses konvergensi simbolik para netizen terkait penggalangan dana kampanye politik (*crowdfunding*) di Fanpage Facebook Ridwan Kamil hingga menghadirkan kesadaran bersama komunitas untuk mendukung gerakan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kasus dan teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi online, wawancara mendalam dan dokumentasi. Teori yang digunakan adalah konvergensi simbolik yang dipopulerkan Ernest Bormann untuk melihat konstruksi kesadaran bersama di antara para facebooker setelah melihat video udunan warga. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan (1) mekanisme *crowdfunding* terdiri dari Relawan Jabar Juara sebagai pencari dana, situs <https://jabarjuara.id> sebagai platform penghubung dan netizen sebagai donatur; (2) Proses konvergensi simbolik berlangsung secara intensif dan berjenjang mulai dari struktur dasar, struktur pesan, struktur dinamis, struktur komunikator, struktur medium dan struktur evaluative. Sebuah visi retorik muncul berkaitan dengan pesan dasar yaitu “dukung udunan warga demi jabar juara”. Visi retorik ini berhasil meningkatkan kesadaran bersama kelompok yaitu tidak hanya mendukung pada tataran wacana tetapi turut menyumbangkan uang mereka untuk biaya kampanye Ridwan Kamil dan Uu Ruzhanul Ulum.

### INTRODUCTION

The rise of internet technology caused almost all people to use it in various activities including political communication channels. The power of the internet and social media used by politicians to gain voter support and raise funds for an online campaign known as crowdfunding. Michael Sullivan coined the term “crowdfunding” which refers to an audience based funding scheme utilizing web 2.0 technology. The term crowdfunding itself is derived from the term crowdsourcing first popular to explain the concept of crowd based resources ([Hemer, 2011:4](#)). The emphasis of the concept of crowdsourcing is the existence of a community (crowd) willing to perform voluntary tasks ([Aitamurto, 2012:12](#); [Brabham, 2013:3](#)). If crowdsourcing emphasizes open calls for the community to participate online in

completing a task, crowdfunding is a collective effort by people who network and pool their money together, usually by Internet. The Canada Media Fund defines crowdfunding with an emphasis on the role of social media, namely raising funds through collecting small contributions from the public (known as the crowd) using the internet and social media ([Nordicity, 2012:4](#)) Crowdfunding used to build relationships by fostering open communication and collaboration with supporters ([Beaulieu et al., 2015; Gerber et al., 2011](#))

This concept used by Barack Obama in the 2008 and 2012 American Presidential Elections to raise political fundraising from donors with a small nominal value ([Elfeky, 2015:18; Khoma, 2015:56](#)). Crowdfunding used internet and social media can make citizen become more active and involved in political campaigns than just voting on elections. The successful and experiences of Barack Obama were adopted politician in all over the world including in Indonesia. The reason is crowdfunding can be a solution to the high cost of political campaigns which charged to politicians or political parties. During the governor's election in 2018, the team of volunteers Ridwan Kamil-Uu Ruzhanul Ulum initiated a political fundraising program called *Udunan Warga* (Funding from the Residents). Political fundraising from resident conducted by Jabar Juara volunteer consists of two types. There are offline and online fundraising. West Java volunteers organize offline fundraising through several events such as utilizing car free day or dinner with Ridwan Kamil. Online fundraising or known as crowdfunding is conducted by accessing the site <https://jabarjuara.id> ([Gloria Vania, 2018](#)). This program takes place from November 2017 to June 2018. Total income of political fundraising is 1,983,177,664 (±2 billion).

West Java volunteers socialize crowdfunding by uploading videos on several social media volunteers (@rkjabarjuara), including fan page Ridwan Kamil such as facebook, twitter, youtube and instgram. Social media supports the success of crowdfunding because of characteristics that other media do not

**158** have. According to ([Mayfield, 2008:5](#)), social media has the characteristics of participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness. In addition, social media also allows members to interact with each other. Interactions occur not only in text messages but also include photos and videos that might catch the attention of other users. All posts (publications) are real time allowing members to share information ([Nasrullah, 2016:40](#)). From various videos and written texts posted on social media, crowdfunding causes political discussion or interaction from virtual communities on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook. The video was posted on February 20 that illustrates the reasons why we should work together for crowdfunding. On May 3, 2018, the video has been watched by 24,439 views and received 2,073 responses (1,934 likes, 102 super, 24 laughs, 7 sad, 1 angry), 648 comments and 169 shares. The number of followers of Ridwan Kamil's Facebook is 3,318,730 people.

The interaction among virtual communities on Ridwan Kamil's facebook very likely to create a shared group of consciousness to support crowdfunding movements. This can be explained through symbolic convergence theory. SCT is a general theory of communication, SCT explains how humans come to share a common symbolic consciousness (reality). It allows us to look at human talk and explain how collectivities of people build a shared consciousness that provides emotion, meaning, motive, and value for human action ([Bormann, Cragan & Shield, 2001:274](#)). This group of individuals can come from groups of people who know each other and interact for a relatively long time, can also come from people who do not know each other and have different ways of interpreting the symbols used but then they communicate so that convergence occurs which creates the same symbolic reality ([Suryadi, 2010:430-431](#)). In short, symbolic convergence theory examines discussion and explains display of shared group consciousness among communities ([Heryanto, 2018:190](#)). There are four arguments about the reasons for discussing symbolic convergence of crowdfunding on

social media that are interesting and relevant to contemporary political communication studies:

1. Crowdfunding in political campaigns is a new phenomenon in Indonesia and still few published studies that discuss this. Some previous studies that discussed crowdfunding put more emphasis on the use of social media for politicians to raise political fundraising in several countries ([Elfeky, 2015](#); [Eranti & Lindman, 2013](#); [Khoma, 2015](#)). Then, what makes this article different and important? There are no published studies on crowdfunding in terms of political communication using symbolic convergence theory. SCT is used to complement aspects that have not been studied from previous crowdfunding research, how the process of exchanging messages creates shared group consciousness among netizens when crowdfunding videos are shared on Facebook's social media.
2. Crowdfunding cannot be separated from the use of social media. The Facebook of Ridwan Kamil helped Jabar Juara volunteer in socializing crowdfunding to cause interaction among its users. Based on a survey released by Hootsuite-We Are Social, the number of Facebook users in Indonesia in January 2018 reached 130 million (41%). This number makes Indonesia the 4th country with the most number of Facebook users after Brazil, America and India (<https://wearesocial.com>). Thus, the study of symbolic convergence about netizens' discussion related to political crowdfunding on facebook is relevant.
3. Symbolic convergence theory applied in the context of political campaigns to explain how netizens come to share a common symbolic consciousness (reality). It allows us to look at netizen discussion and explain how collectivities of netizen build a shared consciousness that provides emotion, meaning, motive, and value to support crowdfunding movement.
4. Shared group consciousness in symbolic convergence theory became stimulant of crowdfunding movement on Facebook social media. In short, without group consciousness,

crowdfunding will not mean anything.

Based on the explanation, there are two problem formulations, namely:

1. How is crowdfunding mechanism conducted by West Java Volunteer Champion?
2. How is the symbolic convergence process among netizens regarding political crowdfunding on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook to build a shared consciousness?

Based on the research problems summarized, there are several research describe about Crowdfunding mechanism consisting of fund seekers, platforms, donors and types of crowdfunding used. The symbolic convergence process among netizens regarding political crowdfunding on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook by Jabar Juara volunteer includes the basic structure, message structure, dynamic structure, communicator structure, medium structure and evaluative structure.

## LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

At the theoretical framework level, this study uses the Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) from Ernest Bormann as the main theory. Some previous studies that discussed crowdfunding put more emphasis on the use of social media for politicians to raise political fundraising in several countries ([Elfeky, 2015](#); [Eranti & Lindman, 2013](#); [Khoma, 2015](#)). There are no published studies on crowdfunding in terms of political communication using symbolic convergence theory. SCT has allowed researcher to explain the impact of the communicative force of fantasy on creating a consciousness that entails meaning, emotion, motive, and value for action for the participants in a chaining fantasy or a rhetorical vision ([Bormann, Cragan & Shield, 2001:274](#)). In this case, SCT is used to find out the process of shared consciousness among netizens on the Ridwan Kamil Facebook fan page after watching video, so that they are interested in supporting the crowdfunding movement.

SCT is a theory inspired by Robert Bales's research on com-

munication in small groups. Ernest Bormann borrowed the idea to be replicated into rhetorical actions of the community on a broader scale than just the process of small group communication. Bormann's intensive research throughout the 1970s then led to the emergence of the Symbolic Convergence Theory. The team used the word symbolic because the theory dealt with language and fantasy and lots of symbolic (as opposed to material and social) facts. They used the word convergence because the theory's basic theorem described the dynamic communicative process of sharing group fantasies as the cause of the union of the participants' symbolic world (Bormann, Cragan & Shield, 2001:276). Symbolic convergence

theory explains the power of communication behind the creation of consciousness (symbolic reality) which is called rhetorical vision. This rhetorical vision provides a drama in the form of perspective, ideology and paradigm of thinking (Heryanto, 2015:174).

Based on the table, the SCT anatomy elements consist of a basic structure consisting of fantasy themes, fantasy types, symbolic cues and sagas. Message structure consisting of rhetorical vision, dramatic personae, plotline, scene and sanctioning agent. Dynamic structures consist of righteous, master and pragmatic master analogue. The communicator structure consists of fantasizer, rhetorical community and communication styles. Structure of the medium consists of group and public

TABLE 1. ELEMENTS IN SCT ANATOMY

No	Symbolic Convergence Theory
1	Basic Structure a. Fantasy Theme b. Fantasy Type c. Symbolic cue d. Saga
2	Message Structure a. Rhetorical vision b. Dramatic personae c. Plotline d. Scene e. Sanctioning Agent
3	Dynamic Structure a. Righteous Master Analogue b. Social Master Analogue c. Pragmatic Master Analogue
4	Communicator Structure a. Fantasizer b. Rhetorical Community c. Communication Style
5	Medium Structure a. Group Sharing b. Public Sharing
6	Evaluative Structure a. Shared Group Consciousness b. Reality Link c. Fantasy Theme Artistry

Source: Bormann, Cragan, Shield (2001) in Kartikawangi (2013:76).

**162** sharing and finally evaluative structure consisting of shared group consciousness, reality link and fantasy theme artistry. The six structure are interconnected and become a unit of analysis that helps researchers understand the SCT concept. Therefore, according to ([Kartikawangi, 2013:72](#)), symbolic convergence theory can be used to explain different phenomena with the same principle. Some of the previous studies using symbolic convergence theory are:

1. Research ([Heryanto, 2015](#)) titled symbolic convergence in online media: study of netizen discussion about century polemic in the SBY-Boediono era." The study examines the symbolic convergence of netizens in the SBY-Boediono era administration regarding the 2013 century case.
2. Research ([Wildan, 2014](#)) titled Symbolic convergence in cyber space communications information disclosure in order to reform the bureaucracy in the Ministry of ICT. This study discusses the implementation of public information disclosure that is implemented through cyber space communication.
3. Research ([Angeline, 2016](#)) titled symbolic convergence in a social movement: A case of "pengumpulan satu juta KTP by teman Ahok. This study discusses the important role of the internet in social movements with a case study of collecting one million ID cards by Ahok's friend.

The three previous studies used symbolic convergence theory to examine discussions with different phenomena or cases. Three previous study examined the symbolic convergence with the medium of group sharing. That means, the discussion involves a more limited group. Meanwhile, this study examines symbolic convergence through medium of public sharing or involving large numbers of people. Because FB Ridwan Kamil is open for everyone to become a member and comment.

## **CONCEPTUALIZATION OF CROWDFUNDING**

Canada Media Fund defines crowdfunding with an emphasis



on the role of social media, namely raising funds through collecting small contributions from the public (known as the crowd) using the internet and social media ([Nordicity, 2012:4](#)) Most of the authors distinguish Crowdfunding into four types: loan based, donation based, reward based and equity based ([Massolution, 2015:40](#)); ([Bradford, 2012:14](#)); ([Ordanini et al., 2011](#)); ([Hasnan, 2019:26](#)). The crowdfunding mechanism consists of three parts that are actively involved: There are fundraisers; crowdfunding portal as an intermediary; and donors who support that idea. The fourth is the bank where money is deposited as a passive member in the crowdfunding project ([Hasnan, 2019:26](#); [Hemer, 2011:12](#)).

### CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

According to ([Mayfield, 2008:5](#)), Social media is best understood as a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics: (1) Participation, social media encourages contributions and feedback from everyone who is interested. It blurs the line between media and audience; (2) Openness, most social media services are open to feedback and participation. They encourage voting, comments and the sharing of information. There are rarely any barriers to accessing and making use of content – password-protected content is frowned on; (3) Conversation, whereas traditional media is about “broadcast” (content transmitted or distributed to an audience) social media is better seen as a two-way discussion. (4) Community, social media allows communities to form quickly and communicate effectively. Communities share common interests, such as a love of photography, a political issue or a favourite TV show; (5) Connectedness, most kinds of social media thrive on their connectedness, making use of links to other sites, resources and people.

In this study, a number of conceptualizations used including: Conceptualization of virtual communities ([Kollock and Smith, 1999 in Heryanto, 2018:188](#)), Characteristics and patterns of

**164** interaction of virtual communities as virtual publics that have variable characteristics and tend to include strong, weak and/or stressful (Porter, 2004); The concept of sense of community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986:9); Conceptualization of political campaigns (Pfau & Parrot, 1993 in Heryanto, 2018:90); Conceptualization of political communication. This is a conceptual framework drawing from this research that will help readers understand the process of symbolic convergence of crowdfunding on Facebook's social media.

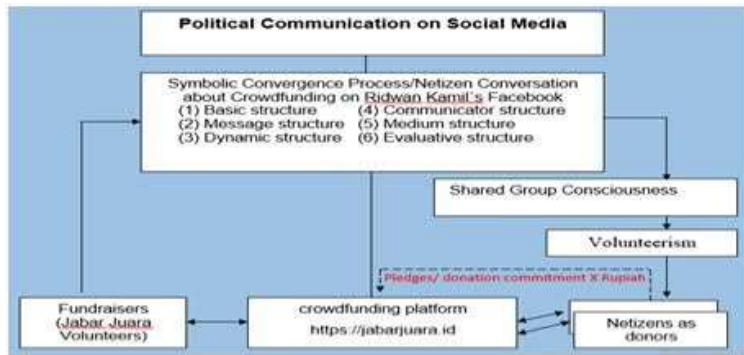


FIGURE 1: SYMBOLIC CONVERGENCE PROCESS ABOUT CROWDFUNDING ON FB RIDWAN KAMIL

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a qualitative research approach with case study method. This is consistent with the opinion of (Bungin, 2015) which states that experts such as Yin and Sevilla, put the case study as a descriptive study (Bungin, 2015:239). The purpose of descriptive research is to provide an accurate picture or data, find data findings or previous research, do categorization, explain the work sequence, document causality relationships and mechanisms and report the background or context of the research situation (Neuman, 2016:44). Data collection techniques used online observation, interviews and documentation. Online observation is reading and concluding the notes of past discussions from an internet forum (Pambayun, 2013:492). The online observation was carried out by observing a video titled "Udunan

Warga” and netizens’ comments on Ridwan Kamil’s Facebook Fanpage.

The online observation was carried out by observing a video titled Uduan Warga (Funding from the Resident), comments on Ridwan Kamil’s Facebook Fanpage. Because FB Ridwan Kamil is a medium for the symbolic convergence process. Interviews were conducted with 5 informants based on purposive procedures. Purposive procedure is the selection of informants according to selected criteria that are relevant to the research problem ([Bungin, 2015:107](#)). The five informants are: Gloria Vania as a West Java volunteer in political crowdfunding and 4 Facebookers with initials AK, DD, YS and ANH. The selection of 4 Facebookers was based on consideration of certain characteristics relevant to the design of this study. The characteristics include: (a) having a facebook account and followers of FB Ridwan Kamil (b) engaging in online discussions at FB Ridwan Kamil in particular about video and / or (c) reposting animated videos related to citizen foliage.

TABLE 2. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Observation	Video “Uduan Warga” and comments from netizens on Ridwan Kamil’s Facebook Fanpage
Interview	1. Jabar Juara Volunteer: Gloria Vania 2. Netizen/Facebook user AK, DD, YS and ANH
Documentation	Fundraising reports, KPU regulations and other records

The research analysis unit borrows the classification of symbolic convergence levels from Jhon F Cragan (1998:99 in [Heryanto, 2015:176](#)) which divides the anatomy of the symbolic convergence process into six structure. The six structure start from the basic structure, message structure, dynamic structure, communicator structure, media structure and finally evaluative structure. Data were analyzed through three concurrent flows of activity: (1) data condensation, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification (Miles, Hubermas & Sadana, 2014). In ad-

**166** dition, the analysis used the Fantasy Theme Analysis. FTA was conducted on a video posted on February 20, 2018 entitled “udunan warga” and netizen`s comments regarding the video.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **CROWDFUNDING MECHANISM**

Political fundraising from resident conducted by west java volunteer consists of two types. There are offline and online fundraising. At a glance, the two fundraising activities are no different because they emphasize the process of collecting small amounts of funds from the public (*crowd*) so, many assume that they can be called crowdfunding. This needs to be straightened out because crowdfunding is a funding process that cannot be separated on internet or social media. This is the definition of the Canada Media Fund (2014:4) that crowdfunding is fundraising through the collection of small contributions from the public (known as the crowd) using the internet and social media. Offline fundraising is carried out from small scale called limited environment where the fund collectors generally know each other or they`re under the same institution. On process, fund collection model is also using traditionally way, for example, collected in a bag or envelope and managed by someone.

The legal basis for political fundraising refers to PKPU No. 5 Article 19 of 2017 where all campaign funds of candidate pairs must be reported the Initial Campaign Funds Report “*Laporan Awal Dana Kampanye*” (LADK), the Campaign Funds Donation Receipt Report “*Laporan Penerimaan Sumbangan Dana kampanye*” (LPSDK) and the Campaign Funds Acceptance and Expenditure Report “*Laporan Penerimaan dan Pengeluaran Dana Kampanye*” (LPPDK), then audited by the Public Accountant Office. The provision is that the maximum number of individual donations is 75 million while the private group or legal entity is a maximum of 750 million following PKPU Article 7 of 2017. The crowdfunding mechanism consists of three parts that are actively involved: There are fundraisers; crowdfunding portal as an in-

termediary; and donors who support that idea. The fourth is the bank where money is deposited as a passive member in the crowdfunding project ([Hasnan, 2019:26;Hemer, 2011:12](#)).

Fundraisers is Jabar Juara volunteer. The fundraising idea came from Michael Viktor Sianipar who also initiated a campaign fundraising program for Basuki Tjahaja Purnama during the 2017 DKI Jakarta Election. The crowdfunding platform as an intermediary is <https://jabarjuara.id>. The site connects funders with donors. West Java Champion volunteers using their own platform. Its means, fundraisers do not cooperate with crowdfunding site provider company. A crowdfunding platform managed independently because funders have a clear mass base and targets so they choose to publish their own crowdfunding projects. In this case, Ridwan Kamil is a public figure who is well known and already have a mass base so that it is not too difficult to socialize "Udunan Warga" program using their own platforms.

Social media is also used to socialize crowdfunding. West Java volunteers use facebook, twitter and instagram with the name (@rkjabarjuara) and youtube channel (jabarjuara). Even social media owned by Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum were also used to campaign for this crowdfunding program. Another important element of crowdfunding mechanism are people support or interested in the community support program. So they able to donors. Interested people can participate as donors by transferring a number of funds to a bank account owned by Jabar Juara and filling in the donor's data online. The communication mechanism during fundraising is also important in supporting the success of crowdfunding. Because the communication made presence trusting and emotional ties between donors of funds with fund seekers ([Haas et al., 2019:14](#)). The communication between them can be done by providing information about the progress of crowdfunding to donors ([Beaulieu et al., 2015;Haas et al., 2019:14](#)). This was done by Jabar Juara volunteer by reporting the results of the fundraising carried out continuously for eight months.

**168** Based on transaction reports in [jabarjuara.id](http://jabarjuara.id), this fundraising takes place from November 2017 to June 2018 with a total income of 1,983,177,664 (± 2 billion). The details are: Rp 39,307,000 (November 2017 – January 2018), Rp 1,367.482,819 (February 2018), Rp 8,260,000 (March 2018), Rp 563,767,845 (April 2018), Rp 4,370,000 (May 2018) and Rp 770,109 (June 2018) (<https://jabarjuara.id>). The amount of the campaign fund income is a combination of offline and online fundraising. The amount of offline fundraising is greater than online. Offline fundraising gets around 1.4 billion rupiah. This is known based on records from the Bandung CFD which received 60 million rupiah, a gala dinner in Bandung 200 million rupiah and a gala dinner in Jakarta 1.2 billion rupiah. Crowdfunding is divided into four categories, namely loan based, donation based, reward based and equity based (Massolution, 2015:40); ([Ordanini et al., 2011](#)); ([Hasnan, 2019:26](#))([Bradford, 2012](#)).

Based on distribution, Jabar Juara Volunteer using crowdfunding donation based. crowdfunding donation base is the same as looking for donations. According to ([Hasnan, 2019:26](#)), donation-based crowdfunding is a charity based contribution where contributor does not expect anything except peace of heart and mind by helping a cause. In this crowdfunding, donors who contribute to RINDU political campaign fundraising are not given prizes, refunds or rewards in any form after making a donation.

### **SYMBOLIC CONVERGENCE PROCESS**

The symbolic convergence process of crowdfunding took place during the political campaign period of Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum. The campaign is defined as a consciously designed, gradual and ongoing process that is carried out over a certain period of time with the aim of influencing the intended target audience ([Pfau and Parrot, 1993 in Heryanto, 2018:90](#)). During the campaign period, political communication took place involving West Java Volunteers and netizens related to crowdfunding programs on social media. According to ([McNair,](#)

[2004:4](#)), political communication is defined as purposeful communication about politics. This consists of (1) All forms of communication carried out by politicians and other political actors to achieve specific goals; (2) Communication shown to political actors by non-politicians such as voters and columnists in the mass media; (3) Communication about political actors and their activities which are published and are the contents of news reports, editorials, and other forms of political discussion in the mass media.

Referring to ([McNair's, 2004](#)) opinion, the intentional nature of political communication can be said to exist in these two categories: (1) Communication is carried out by Jabar Juara volunteer to socialize video "Udunan Warga" to Facebook user or virtual communities in FB Ridwan Kamil. The reason is that netizens support and participate in donating campaign funds; (2) Facebook user comments related to "Udunan Warga" then become political communication addressed to Ridwan Kamil-Uu Ruzhanul Ulum. The symbolic convergence of crowdfunding cannot be separated from the presence of virtual communities on social media. Definition of virtual community in this study refers to the opinion of Kollock and Smith which defines a virtual community as a group of people who share information in cyberspace, discuss common interests, and have the potential to support and solve joint problems ([Kollock and Smith, 1999:16 in Heryanto, 2018:188](#))

In this study, the virtual community refers to members or followers of Ridwan Kamil on his Facebook Fanpage with characteristics such as interacting on Facebook social media networks, discussing common interests related to "Udunan Warga" videos and it is very possible to have joint group consciousness to support the crowdfunding movement. Based on the research findings, the symbolic convergence process of crowdfunding consists of six stages, starting from the basic structure, message structure, dynamic structure, communicator structure, medium structure and evaluative structure. The stages of this symbolic con-

**170** vergence process are derived from text written by FB admin Ridwan Kamil related to crowdfunding videos, narratives from videos of “Udunan Warga” and 25 comments from selected netizen / Facebook user representing 234 comments that can be accessed in this study. The narration or message delivered from the 59-second video is as follows:

*“Ridwan Kamil dan Uu resmi menjadi calon gubernur Jawa Barat 2018. Dua sosok pemimpin muda yang peduli, merakyat dan berpengalaman ini butuh dukungan kita menuju Jabar Juara. Pemilu di Indonesia menghabiskan biaya yang tidak sedikit saatnya kita bantu Ridwan Kamil dan Uu dengan apapun yang kita miliki baik berupa tenaga, waktu, ide dan materi. Kita juga bisa bantu dengan cara praktis dan cukup mudah, dengan cara menyumbang uang minimal 10 ribu rupiah melalui Udunan Warga. Udunan Warga diproses secara transparan, akuntabel, terpercaya dan efisien dapat dicek melalui website dan dilaporkan pada KPU. Dengan kita udunan maka Ridwan Kamil dan Uu akan fokus bekerja untuk cita-cita warga Jabar Juara. Hayu urang udunan. Beberes Jabar bebarengan.”*

*“Ridwan Kamil and Uu, officially became the candidates for governor of West Java in 2018. These two caring, popular and experienced young leaders need our support towards Jabar Champion. Elections in Indonesia cost a lot of money. It’s time we help Ridwan Kamil and Uu with whatever we have in the form of energy, time, ideas and material. We can also help in a practical and fairly easy way, by donating a minimum of 10 thousand rupiah through Udunan Warga (funding from the residents). Funding from residents are processed transparently, accountably, reliably and efficiently can be checked through the website and reported to the KPU. With our support, Ridwan Kamil and Uu will focus on working for the ideals of West Java becoming champion. Let’s go for it (hayu urang udunan). Work together (Beberes Jabar bebarengan).*

The video titled Udunan Warga, then led to interactions in



the form of netizens / facebook comments. There are 648 comments but only 234 comments are publicly accessible. Then, we took 25 comments that represented the views of netizens regarding the video. The video and comments of the netizens were examined using the Fantasy Theme Analysis method.

## BASIC STRUCTURE

The basic structure of *Udunan Warga* Video consists of fantasy themes, fantasy types, symbolic cues and sagas.

- a. Fantasy themes fantasy theme is a dramatizing message that depicts characters engaged in action in a setting that accounts for and explains human experience (Bormann, Cragan and Shields, 2001:282). The fantasy theme in the video is *Udunan Warga*. This fantasy theme refers to the title of the video and Ridwan Kamil's program to raise funding political campaign which is named "Udunan Warga".
- b. Fantasy type is a stock scenario used to explain new events in a well-known; or the workhorse of rhetorical visions. The fantasy types used in the video are; "need our support" (*butuh dukungan kita*) and "elections in Indonesia cost quite a lot" (*pemilu di Indonesia menghabiskan biaya yang tidak sedikit*).
- c. Symbolic cue is a shorthand indicant or code that stands for a fantasy theme such as a sign or symbol or an inside joke. The symbolic cues in the video is; "transparent, accountable, trusted and efficient can be checked through the website and reported to the KPU"; (*transparan, akuntabel, terpercaya dan efisien dapat dicek melalui website dan dilaporkan pada KPU*).
- d. Saga is a detailed account of the achievements in the life of a person, group, community, organization, or nation. Saga in the video are: the ideals of West Java become champions (*Cita-cita Warga Jabar Juara*); Let's go for it (*Hayu urang udunan*) and Work together (*Beberes Jabar bebarengan*)

Some screenshots of conversations that represent the basic structure related to the video on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook Fanpage:



FIGURE 2: COMMENT OF FACEBOOK USER  
Source:Netizen comments on Ridwan Kamil’s Facebook about crowdfunding (May 3, 2018)

This is a simple description of the basic structure of netizen discussion related to video crowdfunding on FB Ridwan Kamil

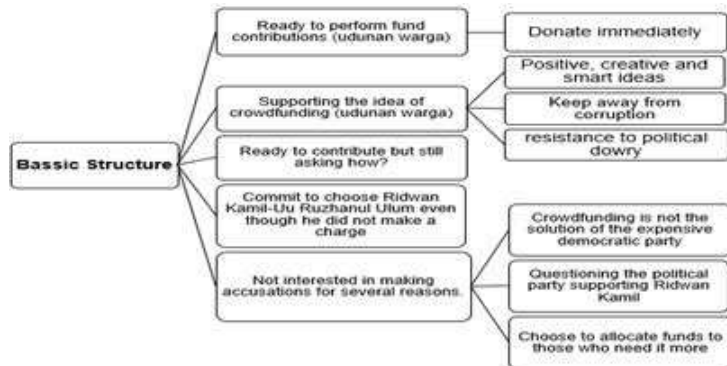


FIGURE 3: THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF CROWDFUNDING  
Source:Netizen comments on Ridwan Kamil’s Facebook about crowdfunding(May 3, 2018). Processed for research purposes.

In the basic structure, there are 5 basic messages derived from fantasy themes related to Udunan Warga video: (1) Ready to perform fund contributions (udunan warga) and donate immediately; (2) Supporting the idea of udunan warga; (3) Ready to contribute but still asking how? (4) Commit to choose Ridwan Kamil-Uu Ruzhanul Ulum's even though he did not make a charge and (5) Not interested in making accusations for several reasons.

### MESSAGE STRUCTURE

SCT's major message structure concept is rhetorical vision, that is, "a composite drama that catches up large groups of people in a symbolic reality. Thus, a rhetorical vision's sub structural elements include dramatis personae or characters, plot lines or action, elements of the scene or setting, and sanctioning agent or legitimizer for the rhetorical vision ([Bormann, Cragan & Shields, 2001:285](#))

TABEL 3. MESSAGE STRUCTURE

Dramatic Personae	Scene	PlotLine	Sanctioning Agen
- Kang Emil is an example and a good pioneer for other candidates	Governor elections of West Java	- Elections in Indonesia have resulted in significant costs. - Keep away from corruption. - Good form of dowry resistance to parties	- Democracy will be better - Crowdfunding is processed transparently, accountably, reliably, and efficiently can be checked through websites and reported to the KPU

Source: Netizen comments on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook about crowdfunding (May 3, 2018). Processed for research purposes.

Based on the video and discussion of netizens related to crowdfunding, a rhetorical vision emerged, "support crowdfunding for West Java Champions". it means that if we support political crowdfunding, the huge campaign costs will be light and Rindwan Kamil will focus on efforts to realize the ideals of the West Java become Champion.

### DYNAMIC STRUCTURE

Dynamic structure is a deep structure of rhetorical vision in

**174** the process of symbolic convergence which consists of 3 components, namely righteous master analogue, social master analogue and pragmatic master analogue. righteous master-analogue rely upon fantasy themes that stress correctness, the right way, morality, and so forth. Those visions steeped in a social master-analogue stress such elements as humaneness, social concern, family, brotherhood and sisterhood, and so forth. Those visions steeped in a pragmatic master-analogue stress such elements as the bottom line, what will work, what is expedient, and so forth ([Bormann, Cragan & Shields, 2001:288](#)). Examples of netizen discussions related to dynamic structures are in the table below.

TABLE 4. DYNAMIC STRUCTURE

Righteous Master Analogue	Sosial Master Analogue	Pragmatic Master Analogue
Fundraising without coercion	Ready. The important thing is to listen to the people's aspirations	crowdfunding is processed transparently, accountably, reliably, and efficiently, can be checked through websites and reported to the KPU.
no need for corruption or debt to find campaign funds	Leaders are indebted to the people because they work to serve the people	Crowdfunding is widely used in the US and Europe. the mechanism is more accountable, transparent, clear sources of funds. so that it will not depend on party funds whose sources are unclear.

Source: Netizen comments on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook about crowdfunding (May 3, 2018). Processed for research purposes.

In general, there is a common thread in the dynamic structure that crowdfunding is a solution to the high costs of political campaigns imposed on candidates.

### COMMUNICATOR STRUCTURE

This structure relates to anyone who shares fantasy themes to create a sense of reality. In this context, there are several concepts of fantasizers, rhetorical community and communication style ([Bormann, Cragan & Shields, 2001:289](#)).

- a) Fantasizers are a number of individuals who position themselves more readily than others. There are two fantasizers, namely: (1) Admin of the FB RK who posted a crowdfunding videos on February 20, 2018. Admin of FB RK became an

active fantasizer because he answered several questions related to crowdfunding; (2) Some members of the RB FB community. Community members who become fantasizers are basically rows of supporters of Ridwan Kamil whose job is to block negative news on social media.

- b) Rhetorical Community is a participant in a rhetorical vision that shared group consciousness. The rhetorical community that shared consciousness about crowdfunding was netizens who were followers of FB Ridwan Kamil. These netizens are not just talking but supporting and contributing funds.
- c) Communication style describes the wide use of language from the community that creates discourse. It also describes the feeling of being shared consciousness as part of membership and communication interaction. Communication style conducted by netizens follows the terms and policies related to Facebook community standards.

This is the communicator structure in the symbolic convergence process at FB Ridwan Kamil

TABLE 5. COMMUNICATOR STRUCTURE

Fantasizer	Rhetorical Community	Communication Style
Admin FB Ridwan Kamil (posted a video related to crowdfunding) and some followers of the FB RK.	Facebookers who are followers of Ridwan Kamil on his FB account.	Terms and policies related to Facebook Community Standards

## MEDIUM STRUCTURE

The structure of the medium consists of two categories. There are group sharing and public sharing. public sharing involves large numbers of people while group sharing involves more limited groups.

In this study, the structure of the medium is included in the category of public sharing because the Facebook fanpage that posts crowdfunding videos belongs to Ridwan Kamil, where the account is open to the public and one can easily become followers so that anyone can basically share information, narratives, meanings, emotions and others.

**176** Actually, these followers can easily make comments but the Ridwan Kamil Facebook seems to filter out negative comments, so that the comments cannot be seen. In this case, there were 648 comments related to crowdfunding videos, apparently only 234 comments were accessible. Based on research observations of 234 comments, there are 163 positive-pitched comments, 40 negative-pitched comments and the other talk about things outside crowdfunding.

### **EVALUATIVE STRUCTURE**

In SCT, three primary technical concepts enable the evaluation of the quality and effects (outcomes) of fantasy-sharing among the members of rhetorical collectivities: fantasy theme artistry, shared group consciousness, and rhetorical vision reality-links ([Bormann, Cragan & Shields, 2001:291](#)).

- a) Fantasy Theme Artistry is related to the assessment of rhetorical creativity, the novelty of the competitive value of fantasy themes, symbolic cues, saga and rhetorical vision. In this study, rhetorical creativity tends to do a lot of repetition between one Facebook user and another Facebook user and even misinformation from one member who became a fantasizers related to how to send funds if they want to donate.
- b) Reality link is an evaluative structure that connects rhetorical vision and fantasy to the objective reality of material facts and public records. In this case, the evaluation of reality link is actually contextual. The discussion about raising campaign funds is very relevant as a solution to the high cost of campaign funds needed by a prospective candidate during the general election. This refers to a study conducted by Perludem that there are 4 types of expenditure that cause high costs for regional election contestation, namely: (1) Costs for nomination to political parties / joint political party bearers, popularly called dowry or boat rental fees; (2) Costs for campaigns (banners, success teams) and imaging politics; (3) Electability

survey costs accompanied by winning consultations, and (4) Costs for money politics to voters ([Perludem, 2011:16](#)).

- c) Shared group consciousness is an evaluative concept that reminds one using SCT to check for the occurrence of symbolic convergence. Usually, in this context we see the connectivity of people who have shared fantasy themes or provided some kind of interpretation of the ongoing reality.

Based on the findings that have been presented previously, in the basic structure, there are 5 basic messages derived from fantasy themes related to video “Udunan Warga”: (1) Ready to perform fund contributions and donate immediately; (2) Supporting the idea of crowdfunding; (3) Ready to contribute but still asking how? (4) Commit to choose Ridwan Kamil-Uu Ruzhanul Ulum’s even though he did not make a charge and (5) Not interested in making accusations for several reasons.

Based on the five basic netizen messages, it is known that a minority of Facebook users are not interested in crowdfunding for various reasons that they are written in the comments on Ridwan Kamil’s FB. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with Facebook users (YS and ANH) who said that crowdfunding was not the solution to the high cost of democratic party. The most Facebook users are at the level of supporting crowdfunding (udunan warga). This can be known from the 163 comments that support the four basic structures: (1) Ready to perform fund contributions and donate immediately; (2) Supporting the idea of crowdfunding; (3) Ready to contribute but still asking how? (4) Commit to choose Ridwan Kamil-Uu Ruzhanul Ulum’s even though they did not make a charge. The group that supports crowdfunding divided into 2 categories:

1. Rhetorical communities that shared group consciousness at the level of basic structures, message structures and dynamic structures, namely groups with a variety of fantasy themes, symbolic cues, fantasy types, saga and rhetorical vision but are not followed by a concrete action to raise funds.
2. Rhetorical community whose various shared group conscious-

ness then led to a concrete action which was to contribute a number of funds.

In this context, shared group consciousness in discourse or sharing the idea that the importance of crowdfunding (udunan warga) to be supported is adequate but still lacking practically. The lack of shared group consciousness at the level of the crowdfunding movement can be seen from the results of interviews, conducted with 2 netizens supporting crowdfunding (AK and DD). Both netizens stated that they did not donate funds for several reasons. Netizen AK stated that he did not know how to send money so he only supported it through comments on FB. Netizen DD stated that he did not have enough money but was only able to express support through comments on FB. Basically, they were convinced that crowdfunding would contribute to the ideals of West Java becoming Champion. This is evidence of the lack of shared group consciousness in the level of movement.

## DISCUSSION

Crowdfunding cannot be separated from the use of social media. Ridwan Kamil's Facebook fan page helped West Java Volunteer Champion in publicizing crowdfunding programs. This is due to the potential of social media that allows interactivity between users, namely between fund seekers (West Java Champion volunteers) and potential donors (netizens). Social media has the characteristics of being participatory, openness, conversation, community and connectedness; ([Mayfield, 2008:5](#)). With the characteristics of social media, FB Ridwan Kamil is not only a media publication but also a new public sphere that allows the shared group consciousness. Symbolic convergence theory proves that fantasy themes can be applied to a wider community than just communication in small groups and the SCT is useful in the context of political campaigns. In this case, the West Java Volunteer made a video titled "Udunan Warga" to send a message how important crowdfunding to be supported. The fantasy



theme in this video then creates a fantasy chain and rhetorical vision for the ridwan virtual community on Facebook Ridwan Kamil. The symbolic convergence process of crowdfunding consists of six stages, namely the basic structure, message structure, dynamic structure, communicator structure, medium structure and evaluative structure.

The basic structure of the discussion of netizens related to the video “Udunan Warga” in FB Ridwan Kamil showed five messages: (1) Ready to perform fund contributions and donate immediately; (2) Supporting the idea of crowdfunding; (3) Ready to contribute but still asking how? (4) Commit to choose Ridwan Kamil-Uu Ruzhanul Ulum’s even though he did not make a charge and (5) Not interested in making accusations for several reasons. Then a rhetorical vision appeared relating the five basic messages, namely “dukung udunan warga demi jabar juara” (support udunan warga for west java become champion). A rhetorical vision is part of the message structure that forms rhetorical communities that support crowdfunding. Basically, rhetorical vision is a collection of various fantasy themes that are shared group consciousness as to present a symbolic reality. Saga “West Java become Champion/Jabar Juara” derived from the campaign slogan Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum played a role in creating a rhetorical vision. Thus, this research implies that political campaign slogans or taqlines play an important role for constructing political consciousness in virtual communities to contribute crowdfunding. Then this rhetorical vision succeeded in raising shared group consciousness which not only supported udunan warga but also donated their money for the campaign costs of Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum.

Research shows the presence of shared group consciousness in discourse is adequate but still lacking practically. Netizens were able to share ideas about the importance of crowdfunding to be supported but practically only a few of them directly contributed. The indication can be seen from the fundraising results obtained. Based on the notes discussed earlier, the results of

**180** raising funds through the offline mechanism are still greater when compared to raising funds online. Fundraising with an offline mechanism receives approximately 1.4 billion rupiah from funds collected around 2 billion rupiah (Jabarjuara.id)

The lack of shared group consciousness can also be seen from the sense of community. According to ([McMillan & Chavis, 1986](#)), a sense of community is defined as the feeling that members of a community are related to a sense of belonging to a community, feelings of mutual concern among members and care about their groups, and sharing the beliefs needed by members to be fulfilled with shared commitment. There are four dimensions of sense of community, namely: membership, influence integration & fulfillment of needs, shared emoticon connection.

Based on these four dimensions, shared emotional connections play a role in forming a sense of community. This can be seen from a number of rhetorical communities that support Uduan Warga using the Rindu Jabar Juara logo on their Facebook picture profile as a sign for supporting Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzahuni Ulum as the governor and deputy governor of West Java. In addition, this emotional connection is also built when the rhetorical community of various rhetorical visions, fantasy themes, saga or campaign slogan of the Rindu is "Jabar Juara" when giving comments related to Uduan Warga videos. However, the sense of community is lacking in the elements of membership, influence, integration and meeting the needs of the rhetorical community.

([Porter, 2004](#)) explains that interactions of virtual communities as virtual publics have changing patterns of interaction and tend to include strong, weak and/or stressful ties. This is different from small groups that tend to have close social relations among members, high group interactions, and focus on maintaining specific relationships within groups. In this case, Ridwan Kamil's Facebook Fanpage which is public sharing has a positive impact a sense of community and a shared group consciousness

in discourse or sharing the idea that it is important to support the community's support. This becomes relevant given the large number of followers on his Facebook and openly providing comments related to udunan warga videos. In this case, virtual public community has a practical weakness, that it does not guarantee the commitment of these communities to always support what the account owner wants because the membership is loose even though in this case the community has openly written down their support for udunan warga.

This research also shows that the existence of virtual communities in social media in the context of political campaigns has the potential to create tangible economic value. This is in line with the characteristics of the virtual community that (Porter, 2004) stated that the characteristics of the virtual community viewed from the model are conceptualized into 2 levels; profit and non-profit. Based on this case, virtual community in Ridwan Kamil's Facebook Fanpage turned out to become so potential that it gives benefits not only to governor electoral but also in economic terms (fundraising for political campaigns/crowdfunding). In the end, crowdfunding in political campaigns will be meaningful and successful if it is able to build shared group consciousness in social media. Conversely, without shared group consciousness, crowdfunding in political campaigns were nothing.

## CONCLUSION

Based on research and discussion results, several conclusions were drawn to answer the research objectives:

1. The crowdfunding mechanism cannot be separated from the 3 elements that act actively: fundraisers, platforms and donors. Fundraisers are West Java volunteer, the platform used <https://jabarjuara.id>, and netizen who are interested in the idea of crowdfunding then become donors. The type of crowdfunding used by West Java Volunteer is donation based.
2. The results showed that the process of crowdfunding symbolic convergence in Ridwan Kamil's Fanpage Facebook took

**182** place in stages ranging from basic structure, message structure, dynamic structure, communicator structure, medium structure and evaluative structure. In the basic structure there are 5 basic messages derived from fantasy themes related to Udunan Warga video, namely (1) Ready to perform fund contributions (udunan warga) and donate immediately; (2) Supporting the idea of udunan warga; (3) Ready to contribute but still asking how? (4) Commit to choose Ridwan Kamil-Uu Ruzhanul Ulum's even though he did not make a charge and (5) Not interested in making accusations for several reasons. Then a rhetorical vision appeared in relation to the five basic messages, namely "dukung udunan warga demi jabar juara" (support udunan warga for West Java become champions). This rhetorical vision is part of the message structure that forms group consciousness that support crowdfunding. Research shows the presence of shared group consciousness in discourse or sharing the idea that the importance of udunan warga to be supported is adequate but still lacking practically. This is relevant given the large number of followers of Ridwan Kamil on his Facebook fanpage and anyone open to commenting on the video. On the other hand, the rhetorical community that is public sharing has practical weaknesses, namely not guaranteeing the commitment of community members to always support what the owner wants because membership is loose. Indirectly in the context of political campaigns, this study also shows that social media networks and the existence of virtual communities have the potential to bring benefits not only in terms of electoral but also economic, that is crowdfunding.

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