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Information Behaviour of Indonesian Women in Website femaledaily.com

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INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR OF INDONESIAN WOMEN
IN WEBSITE *femaledaily.com*

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Abstract

This research examines the information behavior of Indonesian women in the online community on the site *femaledaily.com*. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The aim is to identify women in empowering themselves in the online community. Data were obtained from 107 respondents taken in March 2018. The findings show that the reason Indonesian women use the online community *femaledaily.com* is to share knowledge about beauty, health, and the prices of related products. This knowledge is expressed in the form of reviews, tips, and tutorials. In addition, they are also interested in the latest and accurate information, as well as attractive site views. Most of them act as visitors and passive members. The conclusions show that the information behavior of Indonesian women in the *femaledaily.com* online community is seeking knowledge and becoming a member but not willing to contribute ideas. They share knowledge in the offline environment with the closest people. This is probably due to a busy life in their productive age, which has limited time. Or this is maybe caused by eastern female characters who prefer to act as individuals rather than contribute to a group. Basically, they believe in the online community because the information presented is accurate, up-to-date, complete, and in accordance with their information needs. Suggestions for members are that they should share information actively in discussion forums, while for managers of *femaledaily.com*, they are advised to provide appropriate experts and encourage members to participate. Future research can be done by exploring the differences in women's behavior in online and offline communities, based on a feminism perspective.

Keywords: Information behavior; Indonesian women; Online community; Lifestyle.

Paper type: Research paper

1. INTRODUCTION

Information behaviour is the activities performed in facing the information (Garg, 2016). It is essential for every individual since information is a crucial asset for humans to support their work and daily activities. Well-organized information management could assist an individual in solving problems and make ease the process of decision making. Information behavior of women is unique. In terms of gender, Case and Spink (2012) explained that women were known to have higher peripheral attention and sensitivity compared to men. As women have higher attention, they tend to find information meticulously. On the other hand, men were known to have low attention and likely to ignore their surroundings. This difference is clearly seen in the context of consumerism, where women are more careful in finding the best product in quality and price. (Aharony, 2015; Maghferat & Stock, 2010; Ramprabha, 2017).

As to the information needs of women, it is mostly about problems of appearance. Kamila and Laksmi found that news about women on female.kompas.com, one of the rubrics in news sites in Indonesia, in the April 2015 period (currently the address becomes https://indeks.kompas.com/tag/female), was more inclined to beauty and fashion (Kamila & Laksmi, 2017). This is reinforced by research conducted by Amanda, Prijana, and Yanto who found that fashion is one of the needs of women students at Padjadjaran University, Bandung (2017). In addition, the research conducted by Putri and Fuady (2018) shows how the YouTube female daily network program meet the information needs of netizens on beauty. All of those researches shows that women are looking for information about beauty and fashion, as well as health, because it is a primary need. Their main source is the internet, because of its easy access and renewable information (Purnomo 2011). Based on the research by Nielsen Consumer Media View in 11 main cities in Indonesia, the main source of information obtained from the internet is in third place, which is 44%. The first source of information is television at 96% and sources outside the home 53%. The order was followed by radio 37%, newspapers 7%, and tabloids and magazines 3% (Lubis, 2017).

However, the motivation is not just that. They may not realize that for those who are members of the online community, they get more benefits, such as the opportunity to consult with experts, share experiences, get price comparisons of products, and the like. The process of communication can also be said that their behavior is strongly influenced by the online community. This is due to the fact that women communicating in online are more intense than in real life. The research conducted by Basuki, et al proves that the relationship between women in 2 online communities in Indonesia, namely Women Bloggers Community and Women Pregnant Communities, has active interactions and utilizes these online communities to promote product related to pregnancy (Basuki & et al, 2015).

In this study, *femaledaily.com* as one of the online community is analyzed to see the women's information behaviour. This site is credible to represent women's information behaviour since the website is the largest community website for women in Indonesia. Specifically, the website have topic on women's health and beauty. This research will discuss how women's information behaviour could be represented through *femaledaily.com*. The purpose of the study is to identify women's information behaviour in online community at *femaledaily.com*.

Wilson states that information behaviour is the totality of human behaviour in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking, and information use (Case and Spink 2012). In everyday life, humans face various phenomena and often require decision making to solve a problem. According to

Wilson, Success or failure to overcome the dynamics of life requires the ability to manage information and knowledge, including controlling internal factors, such as emotions. Such behaviour is referred to as information behavior (Case and Spink 2012; Garg 2016). The following are the factors that influence information behaviour: 1) internal factor which is a physiological need; affective need (often called as psychological or emotional); and cognitive need. 2) factor of social role which includes the work role and performance level that will influence the factor of needs in someone. 3) factor of environment which includes work, socio-cultural, political-economic, and physical environment influence the factor of social role and internal needs.

Khoo associates information behaviour with social media. In this system, people can create, share, give, manage and use social media without being limited by time and space (Khoo, 2014). Social media, such as MySpace, Facebook, Friendster, Twitter, Instagram, and others, greatly influence information behavior. The media is used to share information, find friends, fill free time, sell or buy products, giving consultation, and so on. In essence, social media creates an online community.

The online community is social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace (Akar & Mardikyan, 2018; Bateman, Gray, & Butler, 2011). The members who join in a community generally have similarities, such as hobbies, goals, projects, professions, or the same lifestyle. In the online community, each member is expected to participate actively.

However, information behavior that is built on a variety of different factors in each person, manifests its behavior in the form of different participation. Based on research from Akar and Mardikyan, the role of community members is divided into 4 levels, namely visitors, socializers, content generators, and passive members (Akar & Mardikyan, 2018). The first level is called as visitors. He or she opens fewers topics and adds fewer content. The second level is called as socializers. He or she generates a huge amount of content, moderate the discussion, and encourages other members to participate. The third level is called as content generators. They are members who prefer to post replies, open fewer topics and follow up socializers. The fourth level is called as passive members. They tend to choose to read information only and give less information than other members. The content provided can be personal experience, opinions, advice, recommendations (Bateman, Gray, and Butler 2011; Case and Spink 2012; Khoo 2014). This participation is influenced by the gender which include the personality and the character (Steinerová & Šušol, 2007).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive survey method with quantitative approach. Through quantitative approach, the researcher could investigate a phenomenon comprehensively as every aspect of research objects could be identified, categorized, and defined with accurate measurements. Moreover, a survey method was used to collect data from a number of individuals and groups to see the information seeking behavior among them (Wildemuth, 2009). By utilizing this descriptive survey, this study provided a detailed and comprehensive elaboration about women's information needs reflected in *femaledaily.com*.

In this research, the statements on the questionnaires were measured using a five point Likert scale (Wildemuth, 2009). The odd numbers of the scale were used in this survey because the respondents are people who are already experts in the field under study. Therefore, it is assumed there is no bias in responses submitted. The scale was composed of number 1 as a negative statement that tiered into a positive statement at number 5, namely: scale 1 mean totally disagree; scale 2 is disagree; scale 3 is less agree; scale 4 is agree, and scale 5 is totally agree. The measurement results were averaged and grouped into a range of criteria, which was then interpreted as follows:

Range of Criteria	Interpretation
1.00–1.80	Very poor
1.81–2.60	Poor
2.61–3.40	Fair
3.41–4.20	Good
4.21–5.00	Very good

The data obtained were analyzed using statistical calculations. By using a representative sample of the actual members of *femaledaily.com*, the findings of this study are expected to show generalizations in the information behavior of Indonesian women.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Respondents

Pandit This research was conducted for a week started from 4 – 11 March 2018 with 107 respondents in total. Here are the results obtained by the author after going through the stage of distributing the questionnaire done online by using the Google Forms as an instrument of data collection. The identity of the respondent is the data of the users in *femaledaily.com* consisting of email address, cellphone number, and the registered and unregistered members, age range, occupation, frequency of accessing *femaledaily.com* for a week, and the media used to access *femaledaily.com*. The following is an overview of the identity of *femaledaily.com* user respondents:

At *femaledaily.com* website, the users can be categorized into two categories which are registered user or member and unregistered user or non-member. The registered user is the user who has registered by creating an account at femaledaily.com, while the unregistered user is the user who does not have a member account. Based on the data, the total respondents is 107. The respondents who registered as members have acquired as many as 33 respondents (30%), while respondents who are not registered as members have acquisition of 74 respondents (70%).

The member of *femaledaily.com* could get advantages and privilege to post their thoughts, review of a product or an experience regarding beauty and health. Other than that, the member could discuss and socialize with other members in the forum provided and could also access all information available at *femaledaily.com*. The unregistered member or non-member could not post their opinions at the sites page. They also could not have the discussion between users because they do not have account at *femaledaily.com*. However, they could access and empower the information available at this website.

From 107 respondents, 106 respondents are in the age range of 18 – 40 years old. Followed by the age range of 41 – 65 with 1 respondent. There is no data of respondent for the age range of 12 – 17 years old who have accessed

femaledaily.com. Thus, it can be concluded that the majority of *femaledaily.com* users are adults or productive age groups in the age range of 18-40 years, where in this age range group they still have good enough energy and enthusiasm as well as enthusiasm in finding and obtaining new information. One of the ways is by reading articles about beauty and health provided by the sites, reviewing a beauty product, discussing, and sharing experiences in the discussion forum.

The majority of users is the group of students/college students with 73 respondents (68%). Next is 26 respondents who are in the employee group. Followed by 4 housewives, 1 entrepreneur, and 3 others. This is because students or college students is in the middle age stage to adulthood, so many of them need information regarding the changes in themselves especially in female beauty and health.

Based on 107 respondents, the highest result for the statement regarding their frequency of accessing *femaledaily.com* in fulfilling their information needs is 1x a week with 56 respondents (52%). Based on these facts, it can be concluded that women prefer to seek information through online media (Lubis, 2017; Purnomo, 2011; Ramprabha, 2017). Followed by 16 respondents who access it 2x a week. Next, there are 14 respondents who access it 3x a week. Followed by 9 people who access it 4x a week, 3 people who access it 5x a week, 2 people who access it 6x a week, and 7 people who access it ≥7x a week, It can be inferred that the average users of *femaledaily.com* access it at certain time, for example when they have free time with no main activities done.

The user can access Female Daily through three different Medias, which are through website, smartphone application (Female Daily HQ), and social media (YouTube, Instagram, etc.). There are 78 users who use website as a media to access *femaledaily.com*. 55 respondents access it through social media and 24 respondents through smartphone application access. It can be concluded that the use of Female Daily website, *femaledaily.com*, is still the most effective media for users. The convenience in accessing the *femaledaily.com* website is the right reason because the users only need to use internet connection, and they can directly look for the information they need in the browser page (Idhom, 2017; Rowley, Johnson, & Sbaffi, 2015).

3.2. Analysis of user activity in website *femaledaily.com*

3.2.1 The reason for using *femaledaily.com*

Personal factor in using *femaledaily.com* consists a statement indicator which includes the factor derived from the user's self and background that make users log in *femaledaily.com* in meeting their information needs. The analysis is presented through statements number 1 – 3, as showed at Table 3.2.1a.

Table 3.2.1a Personal Factor in using *femaledaily.com*

No.	Statement	Average score	Interpretation
1.	I access and use *femaledaily.com* because I love to discuss in the site	2.981	Fair
2.	I access and use this site because of the laid back/informal atmosphere	3.935	Good
3.	I can share the information obtained from this site to other people	4.157	Good
	Total	3.691	Good

The above table of personal factor show that is considered as good (with average score 3.691). The highest score (4.157) is on statement number 3. It states that the information obtained by the users can be shared to other people who has the same information needs. This also means that *femaledaily.com* users have trusted the accuracy and updated information available. Information needed in many life aspects, starting from information to go through daily life, academic needs, until the needs to spread knowledge (Garg, 2016; Khoo, 2014). Thus, *femaledaily.com* is already capable to meet the information needs of the users because the information available can also be used to spread knowledge to other users. This is not much different from statement number 2 (3.935). The most 39 respondents give their neutral responses. In the discussion column and in the article page of the web *femaledaily.com*, it presents the atmosphere which is relaxing for the users. The use of slang is not matter for the users and the management of *femaledaily.com* as long as it is not offensive about ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup relations. The users can also exchange information and share their experiences to each other with informal language in the online forum.

Personal factor with fair consideration (2,981) is statement number 1. It states that users of *femaledaily.com* is not that active in doing a discussion in the column provided. The discussion column aims to be a platform for users to exchange information and experiences about a product, service, or other things surrounding beauty and health. However, from 7,500,000 pageviews per month, there are only 18.000 forum threads. Most of the user only do information search to meet their information needs, but without taking parts in giving or exchanging their experiences in the discussion column. Through explanation above, it can be inferred that the online community at *femaledaily.com* does not yet have strong social relationship between one user and others.

The attraction of *femaledaily.com* are certain aspects encouraging women to visit *femaledaily.com* as an act to fulfill their information needs. Statement number 4 until 7 represented internal factors from 107 respondents, as presented at Table 3.2.1b.

Table 3.2.1b Attraction of *femaledaily.com*

No.	Statement	Average score	Interpretation
4.	I always visit *femaledaily.com* due to the update and current information provided by the website	4.166	Good
5.	I visit this site because its user-friendly access in getting information I need	4.092	Good
6.	I access this site due to its attractive visual design	3.851	Good
7.	I access this site because the information and news are valid and accurate	3.898	Good
	Total	4.002	Good

The interpretation of internal factors to encourage the women visit the site is good (with average score 4.002). Statement number 4 shows that *femaledaily.com* was known to give women updated health and beauty information. The updated and current information on the website assisted the users to widen their knowledge, so that they could fulfill their lack of information regarding women's health and beauty. Statement number 5 shows that more than a half of respondents agreed with information convenience within the website. This can be seen through various and detailed features provided by the website. Through those features, users could choose any information they need in fulfilling their information needs.

Statement number 6 demonstrates there were 43 respondents agreed that *femaledaily.com* provides attractive visual design for users. This can be resulted from white and pink colors domination presented in the website's homepage. The white color represents openness and freedom values, while pink color, most of women's favorite color, stands as feminine color, particularly in symbolizing women's health and beauty. Altogether, these two colors embodied women's values notably in assisting users to fulfill their information needs through the website. Statement number 7 shows 48 respondents agreed that the information and news presented in *femaledaily.com* are correct and accurate. Regarding this, *femaledaily.com* routinely update new and more accurate information for users' convenience. Moreover, the information provided by femaledaily.com was taken from primary source. For instance, most of beauty products reviews were directly written by the users based on their experience. In other words, the accuracy of the information is guaranteed.

3.2.2   Female users' information needs on *femaledaily.com*

The women information behaviour is represented in the type of information they need. The types of information that users seek at *femaledaily.com* is a statement indicator that includes any kinds of information sought by female users in *femaledaily.com*. Here is the analysis presented through number 8 – 15 as presented in Table 3.2.2a.

Table 3.2.2a Types of Information Need

No.	Statement	Average score	Interpretation
8.	I access and use *femaledaily.com* for the article reviews of beauty and health products	4.472	Very good
9.	I access and use it for the information about beauty events	3.305	Fair
10.	I access and use this site for the beauty news and tips	4.240	Very good
11.	I access and use this site for the Information about the price of beauty and health products	4.250	Very good
12.	I access and use this site because there is information about tutorials on using beauty products	3.990	Good
13.	I access and use this site for the information about purchasing tickets of beauty events	2.888	Fair
14.	I access and use this site to get free beauty products	3.018	Fair
15.	I access and use this site for the video about beauty products	3.907	Good
	Total	3.759	Good

The type of information at this table is considered as good (average score 3.759). The highest scores are at 3 statements, which are statement number 8, 10, and 11. Statement number 8 (4.472) shows that the responses of 63 respondents give responses considered as very good. *Femaledaily.com* has more than 100.00 reviews of female beauty and health products. This can be really helpful for the users in meeting their information needs through reviews because from the reviews, users can find information from other people's experience who have used the product. Thus, the information obtained by users is a primary information source. Statement number 10 shows that the 47 respondents give the responses considered very well (4.240). It can be explained that *femaledaily.com* community site often posts new articles weekly according to the recent issues regarding female beauty and health. One of the expected behavioral information activities is sharing information, because it can educate other members (Garg, 2016). Statement number

11 shows that the 47 respondents give the responses as very good (4.250). It appears that the *femaledaily.com* site always provides the price of a product in every review and article posted in the website. This facilitates the users in considering the product. According to Maghferat and Stock (2010), women tend to analyze information in detail. They not only want to know what products are the best and the latest, but also must know about prices, how to use, and also the impact.

The type of information is considered good are on the statement 12 and 15. Statement number 12 shows that 48 respondents are interpreted as good (3.990). This is because other than reviews, *femaledaily.com* also has the tutorial on using beauty products such as make up, skin care, and other products as well as explanations of them that are posted in articles and videos. Statement number 15 shows that the most chosen statement by 42 respondents is interpreted as good (3.907). This happens because other than providing information visually, *femaledaily.com* also routinely makes information in audio-visual form through the posted videos. Through the videos, it provides tutorials on using a product, steps, and tips that are certainly related to female beauty and health.

The last type of information is considered fair are on the statement 9, 13, and 14. The statement number 9 can be inferred that there were not many users who use and access information at *femaledaily.com* to look for information about beauty events. Through the data presented at the statement number 13, it appears that respondents tend to choose neutral to the statement of using and accessing *femaledaily.com* for the information about purchasing tickets of beauty events. Based on the previous analysis, it can be said that the information about purchasing tickets for beauty events did not attract significant attention for users because the information is not the most important content needed by users. In the statement number 14, it can be concluded that the information about how to get free beauty products or giveaway is not the information needed by the majority of *femaledaily.com* users.

There are several statements indicating *femaledaily.com* as an information source discussing women's health and beauty. Statement number 16 until 19 represents *femaledaily.com* use as women's information source in fulfilling their information needs. They are presented at Table 3.2.2b.

Table 3.2.2b Using *femaledaily.com* as an Information Source

No.	Statement	Average score	Interpretation
16.	*Femaledaily.com* is my main information source to seek information about health and beauty	3.814	Good
17.	*Femaledaily.com* makes information seeking easy and provides comprehensive information regarding women's health and beauty	4.305	Very good
18.	I visit and use *femaledaily.com* because the information and news presented are suitable with my information needs	4.083	Good
19.	I access and use *femaledaily.com* because it is useful to expand my knowledge	4.361	Very good
	Total	4.141	Good

The interpretation of using *femaledaily.com* as an information source is good (with average score 4.141). The highest score are in the statement 17 and 19. Statement number 17 shows most of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that *femaledaily.com* provided user-friendly access to seek for information and comprehensive women's health and beauty information. The act of information seeking itself is an activity of an information user in fulfilling

information needs. This finding is similar to the research conducted by Purnomo regarding the new sub culture for market in Indonesia, that the ease of accessing information about a product will influence the decisions of female buyers. In this digital era, easy access to information is obtained from online media (Purnomo, 2011). Statement number 19 shows that more than a half of respondents agreed that *femaledaily.com* assist its users to expand their knowledge. Consequently, most of the users would consistently visit *femaledaily.com* to seek information about women's health and beauty. Eventually, the site not only presents current health and beauty information, but also a forum for discussion so that every user could share knowledge for each other.

The good interpretation is at the statement 16 and 18. Statement number 16 demonstrates majority of respondents placed *femaledaily.com* as the main information source about women's health and beauty. Furthermore, *femaledaily.com* always provide up-to-dated issues and recent health and beauty innovation. Accordingly, community website *femaledaily.com* is women's primary choice in fulfilling their information needs. Statement number 18 shows that it can be seen that most of the respondents agreed that information and news on *femaledaily.com* were corresponding to the users' needs.

3.3. The Role of users at *femaledaily.com*

The role of users at *femaledaily.com* is a statement indicator that discusses about the role of users and their participation or activities that they do in *femaledaily.com* community sites. This is the result presented through number 20 – 21 as presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 The Role of users in *femaledaily.com*

No.	Statement	Average score	Interpretation
20.	I am a member of *femaledaily.com* who is active in giving ideas/writings/reviews	1.925	Poor
21.	I access and use it as a passive user and only use it to look for information according to my information needs	4.407	Very good
	Total	3.166	Fair

The role of users is considered as fair (average score 3.166). The highest score is in statement number 21 (4.407). It states that 64 respondents with the response strongly agree can be inferred that the majority of *femaledaily.com* users is passive users who only use the platform to look for information. An online community shows some components, one of them are active and recurring participation by the members with strong interactions and ties (Bateman et al., 2011; Khoo, 2014). As a community site which has a virtual community or online community, *femaledaily.com* has not been able to be used effectively in building the concept community because of the lack of empowerment of chat rooms and discussion forums.

Statement number 20 give the interpretation as poor (1.925). This can be explained because there are approximately 7,500,000 monthly visits to the website, but there are only 4,000,000 forum posts and 18,000 forum threads at femaledaily.com. Through the data, it can be inferred that the users more likely use and access *femaledaily.com* only to look for information to meet their information needs and not to share information and experiences. It appears that the majority of users were not active in providing ideas/writings/reviews in sections

provided. Based on the analysis of statement 1 until 21, the community website *femaledaily.com* has already provided suitable information for the users.

4. DISCUSSION

Literacy Information behavior of Indonesian women, both members and non-members of the website *femaledaily.com*, is formed by the nature of women who like to pay attention to physical appearance. Their attention is focused on information related to appearance, such as beauty, health, fashion, and daily lifestyle (Aharony, 2015; Amanda et al., 2017; Ramprabha, 2017). This is considered reasonable, because almost all respondents, aged 18 to 40 years, are mature women who are in productive age. This age range is a very dynamic age period, both as employees in the workplace and students in universities, as well as their role as women in everyday life, namely the role of reproduction, the role of productive workers, and social roles (Abdi & Rachman, 2017). This is in accordance with Wilson's statement which states that information behavior is influenced by demographics (Garg, 2016). These conditions affect the behavior of their information when accessing the website *femaledaily.com*. This website is an online community that provides communication columns for its members.

The behavior of information in the virtual world is formed by the environment, it will be built more strongly in an online community (Basuki, et al 2015; Bateman, Gray, and Butler 2011; Khoo 2014). In the *femaledaily.com*, only a small number of Indonesian women intend to involve themselves as permanent members. They behave as passive members. Most of them only intend to look for information about beauty and health, especially the reviews. This is because the information in the review category is the primary information obtained directly from the experience of other users based on the knowledge they have. The person who wrote the review is one of the behaviors of women who like to share. Indonesian women tend to have a greater social role, so they share more knowledge in groups (Abdi & Rachman, 2017; Steinerová & Šušol, 2007).

Uniquely, in this online community only a small people, from the group of socializers, who actively share the knowledge and experience in the discussion forum. Other members prefer to share information offline to people who closest to them, such as family and best friends. This is similar to Stefan Ek's research on the behavior of health information in Finnish, one of the cities in the Republic of Finland, which states that women prefer to discuss health information with people who closest to them (Ek, 2013; Steinerová & Šušol, 2007). Besides that, they also like audio-visual tutorials. They like the information presented because they think the information presented is accurate, complete, and up-to-date. In addition, they are also interested in the appearance of the website which is dominated by white and pink, feminine colors. Overall, the display can make viewers more relaxed.

5. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the information behavior of Indonesian women in the *femaledaily.com* online community is passive behavior, which is shown by behavior that prefers to absorb knowledge for themselves rather than discuss in online forums. They are willing to share the knowledge gained from the website to the closest people, such as family, college friends or colleagues. This is probably due to their busy life as young people in productive age who are very limited by time. Another possibility is that this is caused by the character of eastern women who prefer

to act as individuals, rather than contributing in groups. However, they consistently visit the website in their spare time and still have trust in *femaledaily.com*. They also like the presentation of information that is accurate, up to date, complete, and in accordance with their information needs.

Suggestions given to groups of socializers and content generators so that they continue to actively share knowledge in the review rubric. While it is recommended for passive member groups to take the time and venture to share knowledge in the discussion section. For managers of *femaledaily.com* it is recommended that they provide experts in the field of beauty and health and more actively encourage passive members to discuss.

In general, this study has limitations in the number of inadequate samples and the determination of indicators that are too narrow. Future research can be carried out by developing variables and indicators based on a gender perspective, as well as exploring differences in women's behavior in online and offline communities. In addition, further research is also recommended to use qualitative methods based on feminist perspective, so that they can explore different findings.

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