# Indonesian Diaspora Women as Youtuber

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# Indonesian Diaspora Women as Youtuber

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#### Abstract

The presence of the internet provides a virtual room for diaspora women who are living outside Indonesia. They use YouTube as a medium to express emotional bonding with their homeland. It can be identified from symbols or signs that represent cultural identity within their creative videos. This study tried to portray how Indonesian diaspora women revealing their national identity within video YouTube content. Research methods were descriptive qualitative to explore content videos. Data were collected from two of diaspora YouTubers who married with other nations and has more than 1 (one), million subscribers. We analyze the video's location, moment or time background, target viewer, and how they convey the message. The result showed that they are proud of being Indonesian nationality attached by using objects or symbols while sharing about family life. Indonesia women are still portrayed as related to domestic space and responsible for taking care of the family.

Keywords: Indonesia diaspora, women, youtuber.

# Introduction

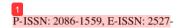
Indonesian people who live in other countries can be classified as a diaspora. We called diaspora to the one who decides to remove residence from a country to another country. Today, the Indonesian diasporas has been scattered in various countries in the world.

The beginning of Indonesian diaspora development was initiated by Dino Patti Djalal. He initiated the commendation of the first diaspora congress in Los Angeles, the United State of America in 2012. It was attended by more than 2000 diaspora people from Indonesia. Currently, the number of Indonesian diasporas is more than 8 million people (Muhidin & Utomo, 2016). These numbers will be more increasingly growing number shortly. These are a kind of potential resources that can be empowered in the development of Indonesian.

Glotalization gives away for diaspora's spreading across the nation. Diaspora means as, people with a common origin who reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside the borders of their ethnic or religious homeland-whether that homeland is real or symbolic, independent or under foreign control. (Shain & Barth, 2003). The concept of the modern diaspora broadens its point of view than just people's migration.

Many scholar has been interested in the phenomenon of diaspora (Christou, 2009; H. M. Chu et al., 2011; Henry & Mohan, 2003; Weng, 2014). They discussed it from various interesting points of view. One of the interesting highlights of this development study is discussing on how cultural identity was constructed in the forms of diaspora's daily communication while doing interactions.

The interaction of diaspora people becomes more interesting to explore. They are probably using particular symbols originated come from their homeland while doing



interaction with people from other nations. Their interaction involves the communication process. This communication process can be constructed in different ways. It is not the same like when they were in their homeland because it was already mixed with the new one as results of adaptation.

Being far from the homeland means that diaspora also far from families and previous social groups. They are forced to adapt and building interaction with the new society or new socials group. They need to mingle and encourage to maintain their existence. They have to fuse their identities to adapt will local culture(Clancy, 2011; Shain & Barth, 2003; Sun, 2005; Yeoh & Huang, 2000). However, the adaptation is not making their identity vanish. Their identity still endures. Therefore, sometimes they appeared within a new version as a new identity, mixed with local identity.

Within diaspora phenomena, the concept of identity was seen as a result of discourse construction rather than being associated with certain biological concepts or groups of people (Hall, 2014). Rather than maintaining the origin biological identity, diaspora social interaction while they are far away from home is more important. It is like building new identity or new social reality through communication process.

New identity construction is formed. Unlike the former identity, it is also not fully identified like as recent local culture tradition. The new identity of the diaspora is then illustrated in their communication construction. It can be seen as daily realites, which is arranged in the framework of meaning.

Theoretical background explains that the understanding of communication process is a self-expression process. Communication process involves self-reflection. Therefore, the way of communication can be represented as a person's depiction. A person can be known from how the way he or she communicates to others.

Communication proses can be explained from the theory of representation which revealed that it involves the use of language to convey meaningful messages to others (Hall, 1997). Representation is a process by which mental individuals actively perceive and give meaning to social realities. The construction of the meaning process produces a meaningful reaction that can be exchanged with each other.

The activity of exchanging meanings between group members in society is a transactional process (Belasen & Frank, 2012; Gamble, M. & Gamble, 2013). A person as a member of a group or community will not only understand the symbol of another person's message, but also actively produce messages. Construction of the message's symbol will convey back or returning to each of the group members. Hence, we can assume that people communicate within a construction process of meaning. It is always related to the context of their daily social reality experiences.

Diaspora phenomena will further be seen as playing a role in promoting the identity of a nation. They are also enhancing the reputation of a nation (Clancy, 2011; Hartoni et al., 2019). Many studies have shown that these patron means that being diaspora does not mean forgotten their former or original identity (Clancy, 2011; Effendi, 2016; Narottama & Sudarmawan, 2017; Widodo, 2017). They are still admitting as part of their nation or homeland.

The home country still something important for diaspora. The nation of identity can be easily recognized from certain symbols that they used to express emotional bonding with their homeland (Rofil et al., 2016; Widodo, 2017; Yeoh & Huang, 2000). These kind of emotion to homeland is expressed in many particular ways. They could not easily forgetten their "home" as early life experiences. On the other hand, they still have to adapt to the social environment far from their homeland. So that they will show their emotional

bonding to their homeland in their daily life interaction.

As a result of meaning, the construction of social reality involves fantasy (Brown et al., 2012; McLean & Wainwright, 2009). Fantasy means something which is unreal but it derives from reality. It is a kind of development an illustration way of thinking. It also can be seen as creatively thought. This process is a kind of human effort to show something to others (Papacharissi, 2002). Each individual should have developed their fantasy. They will use of language or other meaningful symbols in accordance with their expectations.

Todays presence of the internet provides connection channel for diaspora who are living outside Indonesia. This has also happened with women Indonesian diaspora who married another nation and living abroad. Until now, internet looks certainly provide spaces for Indonesian diaspora women in carrying out their expression and showing their role. They face many challenges in the integration of cultural identity. Internet gives a away for balancing their life.

YouTube is currently one of the most popular and popular social media almost in the entire world community. (Brodersen et al., 2012; Liikkanen & Salovaara, 2015; Rosalen, 2019). The advantages of YouTube with its audiovisual capabilities make it attractive to anyone. Unlike mass media, people can choose and watch YouTube content according to their needs. Its content more segmented adjusting as needed and can be used repeatedly.

YouTube is one of the social media that can represent people need to express something. It develops various symbols, including significant images, to illustrate the meaning of social reality. YouTube becomes a medium to manipulate the meaning of social reality to be something that can be "enjoyed" by other people for entertainment (D. Chu, 2009; Peterson, 2016). The power of audio-visual that inserted on YouTube makes it more attractive compared to other social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Indonesian diaspora women also use YouTube as a medium to show their existence. They use it as a medium to show friendship, happiness, and also sometimes their anxiety. YouTube can be a place to provide creative channel content connection. It is like a kind of noticement that they want to be still acknowledge as Indonesian and proud to be an Indonesian. Besides, they are much very likely to show that there are still emotional bonding relations with the origin of the country or nation.

Guy Debord's comes up with ideas concerning about Society of Spectacle (Debord, 1967). It seems to be in line with the current habits of current society. People tend to create various visual images to be displayed for the public at large. In this case, YouTube becomes a medium to describe the representation of reality. Imaginations emerge as fruitful creativity in the human mind to enrich it. Hence, people who watch YouTube will use it as an alternative window to see interesting other social realities, that they might not have experienced before.

This research study did not want to explore YouTube famous artists. This study tries to explore just ordinary Indonesian diaspora women who have been labeled as YouTubers and who have lots of subscribers. They are sharing ideas about their activities and also their role in the particular social-cultural background through their lens. They are making videos and sharing them daily. However, their daily life content brings something which represents the appreciation of reality. This research study tried ot portray how Indonesian diaspora women revealing their nationality within video YouTube content.

#### Methods

The main concept of this study is the message construction of subjective meaning. This research is using a qualitative approach to content analysis. Data is collected from Indonesian diaspora women YouTuber which is chosen purposively. It is also determined by the number of their subscribers which reached approximately more than 1 million, and marital status. We also chose the one who married a man from another nation.

We had 2 (two) data source among Indonesian diaspora women YouTuber for this research. There are;

1<sup>st</sup> YouTuber; Trisna Leunufna Matasik. Vlogger called her as Kak Ina. Her YouTube channel is "Keluarga Bahagia di Jerman". Her family rooted is from Papua. She married with Paul Keller from Germany. Now they live in Germany and have 1 (one) daughter. At the time of this study, she has 1,43 million subscribers. (https://www.YouTube.com/channel/UCnAeEo7DLRY0H6gt7VuAHRQ)

2<sup>nd</sup> YouTuber' Nikmatul Rosidah. Her YouTube channel is Dobson's Kitchen & Family Activities. Her family rooted is from Blitar, East Jawa. She married with Paul Dobson from Canada. Now, they live in Hongkong and have 3 (three) children. At the time of this study, she has 1,14 million subscribers.

(https://www.YouTube.com/channel/UCLII0CgnehW7h423--B9C1g)

We filtered from each YouTuber by identifying the performance and the uniqueness of each video as research samples. We selected videos that can be easily recognized representing the nation of Indonesia. Then, we analyzed its content based on some aspect among categories which Myers interested while discussing blog and wikis (Myers, 2010; 5). We decided to choose 4 (four) aspects of them because they provide clear simple distinction content videos such as; 1) geographic location; 2) use of time; 3) target reader; 4) opinion construction. We examined it by video location, moment or time background, target viewer, and on how YouTubers convey the message or information. From these categories, we find out material or emotional bonding construction for being Indonesian diaspora women.

### Results

At this time, it probably already has more numbers of videos. However, when we were conducting this research, there were more than 187 videos from 1st YouTuber channels and 1,322 videos from 2nd YouTuber channels. Among them, we filtered videos from its catchy video's title, representation of Indonesian culture, the amount of subscriber which exceeds more than one million, the number of views and comments which exceeds more than two hundred.

We also observed the attractiveness video content that indicated being proud to be the Indonesian nation, despite being married and living in another country. We also found video content that is closely related to Indonesian culture according to their experiences while visiting their homeland Indonesia.

The summary of 10 videos content analysis of "Keluarga Bahagia di Germany" and "Dobson's Kitchen & Family Activities" is as follows:

#### Location;

Samples showed that the geographic location shown in the videos were in Asia, Europe, and Canada. The location of videos was generally around the house such as their

living room, family room, bedroom, kitchen, workspace, and the terrace and yard. There were also locations outside their home, such as shopping store to buy family needs, pathway to go to schools, and other family recreation areas.

First YouTuber lives in Germany. On her channel, she showed video while she and her family, also their friends were in the backyard or public area, near public roads or city parks. The second YouTuber lives in Hongkong. She showed video while she and her family were living in Hongkong. There are also videos while they were in Blitar (Nikmatul home town). Besides that, she also showed video while they were traveling together to Winnipeg-Canada for Paul's family reunion.

## Use of Time;

Their videos showed the use of the time that is valuable for family togetherness and happiness. The moment is used in connection with daily activities in taking care of the family. Every moment in the video showed their golden moments when they spent together or engaging activities in harmony. The activities were such a simple thing for example while preparing food supplies, preparing food to eat together for lunch or dinner, or when family's gathering with friends or neighbors. There were also special moments such as family birthdays, or scary moment while one of their family members was seriously ill.

Most of the time spent by 1st YouTuber was for reviewing many culinary together with her husband, while 2nd YouTuber liked to persuade her children tasting cuisine and or chit chat using Java language (Blitar) which only very little understood by her family. Besides, there was also another moment while 2nd YouTuber was waiting for children to come home from school, waiting for husbands to come home from his office, and she liked enjoying those moments while looking at the afternoon scenery.

## Target Viewer;

Videos do not specifically target a certain age or group. Their target audience is also not specified for women or men. All ages can watch it. Their video content mostly contains many elements of entertainment, by telling family life. It appears that they did the editing process well done before uploading it into the channel. The video content does not contain adult-specific viewing elements.

Most of 1st YouTuber viewers are younger Indonesian people. However, some have been living in Indonesia before, and some have been living in Europe before, for example, Netherlands, and Germany. Most of 2nd YouTuber viewers are housewife and Indonesian workers who were in Hongkong, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, China, Japan. Some of them are from other nations.

# Opinion Construction;

From this research, it can be seen that the videos showed a manifest or latent message about pleasant and or sometimes bitter things. The construction of utterance messages is conveyed naturally to express emotion, compliment, or opinion to their families. Sometimes videos showed how they were discussing differences that sometimes also happens in Indonesia. In this kind of situation, they showed tolerantly and try to compensate it to accommodate.

The symbols or non-verbal messages that showed were typical Indonesia. It also appeared for cuisines or food recipes that are served. For example, they showed how to use stones to demolish many spices. It is a tool that commonly used by Indonesian

Besides, 1st YouTuber communicated the message with a cheerful personality, shows flexibility, or easy to adapt and shows more self-confidence. She was proud of being an East Indonesian and as Papua's ethnicity. She was able to make laugh at her accent while she could not pronounce Indonesian words properly. It made the videos turn into a unique and interesting spectacle.

Meanwhile, 2nd YouTuber communicated the message with more calm and showing her maternal, sometimes looked shy, and grumbling with her ethnic language (Java language) which cannot be easy to understand for her family. Unlike 1st YouTuber, sometimes 2nd YouTuber showed reluctantly and not self-confident while she could not say something in Indonesian language but more fluent to mention it in her ethnic language (Java). It was an interesting and fun spectacle's video to see her faults pronounce and or showing family's desperate while hearing Java's grumbling.

Their videos featured their daily conversation to use two or three languages at the same time. One of them was the Indonesian language. Occasionally they were using Java and or Papua ethnic languages. The combination of it seemed natural and nice blended with the foreign languages used. Their husbands and children were also occasionally appeared to speak languages from Indonesia.

The use of this language clearly shows the nation's identity. Comments pronounced with thick accents. It can be easily identified from words and accents that it is Indonesia. The use of this mixed language is unique and even sounds funny. Thus, videos were interesting to be seen and listened to continuously..

#### Discussion

Humans exchange information to build a better life through communication activities. Communication is a process that each individual conveys stimulants. Those are usually in the form of written and unwritten symbols to change behavior.

Indonesian diaspora women are also sharing symbols and exchange information through stories to others. They depicted women struggling to live abroad. It can be a stimulant for YouTube viewers to change the point of view that living abroad is not just a simple thing. Creating online content such as YouTube videos can offer women Indonesian diaspora knowledge sharing living in another land. It's kind of self-affirming of their existing in society. Some kind of message to the world that they are fine living far from their homeland.

The identity as Indonesian can easily identify through daily conversation. In this research, two of Indonesia's women YouTubers show theirs responding to cultural differences. It can be seen from how to make food and enjoy eating food, travel to their hometown, visiting relatives, and friendship with neighbors, friends, and colleagues. They are also showing harmony in life even though they have different backgrounds. It reveals happiness built over from romantic relationships, conflict among families, special events, or through scary moments.

Nevertheless, Indonesian diaspora women, who use YouTube social media, have great potential in promoting Indonesian culture. They can describe their life through interesting stories which impulse responses from their viewers. They show the flexibility to unite two different cultures in one harmonious family.

Besides, their pride as Indonesian reflects through their daily life which is very dynamics and also using Indonesian symbol culture. Their children also feel proud as part of the Indonesian nation. Even though they are not fluent in Indonesian, they can blend in with the culture and society of the Indonesian environment.

The overall harmony of the story presented by YouTubers is a form of communication products. They create their life as something to be shown and entertain others. However, their revealed reality might not real, it is called concoction of perception and fantasy of life expectancy (Debord, 1967; Papacharissi, 2002)

Other findings also showed the roles of the Indonesia women diaspora. Understanding women's roles in society can be reviewed from social expectations associated with feminism and masculinity. It is socially constructed as something which has accepted and understood and is a social guide that man and women should be carried out. These expectations can vary depending on the collective agreement that is enforced in a social-cultural system. Therefore, it is possible for each culture to have its own values, norms, or rules that differ from one another to regulate the expectations of social action for men and women in society.

Both YouTubers as Indonesia women diaspora are tended to play their roles like the ones who have responsibility for domestic space. They are managing and taking care of their home, cooking, taking care of their husband and children with love. However, being living abroad makes them show it in a different way than Indonesian women in general. They can create their style and in a modern way.

#### Conclusion

The study of the Indonesian diaspora women concludes that they use the internet as a medium to show their expressions. It also reinforces their existence in the culture of the community in other country's lands. They also induce their participation to promote the Indonesian digital diaspora.

The expected role or traits, attitudes, and behaviors that are considered to be characteristic of women are the result of "social learning" from the surrounding environment. It has also happened with Indonesian diaspora women. The meaning to be Indonesia nationality attached to the object of messages/symbols while describing about their family life. Indonesia women are still described as related to domestic place and responsible for taking care of their families.

One of the advantages for diaspora Indonesia women YouTuber, who married and live abroad, is their potentiality to promote Indonesian culture through their daily life activities. They promote Indonesian culture to their YouTube viewers through the Indonesian language, or their are ethnic that they use, for examples Indonesian cuisine, and daily culture habits from Indonesia, etc. They can adapt to their husband's family, habits, and the new environment without losing her pride for being Indonesian. It is all a set of show emotional bonding as part of the Indonesian nation.

This research only preliminary research. From these limited findings, we recommend further research with other research methods. Indonesian diaspora scattered in many countries and are needed to be more elaborate to enrich findings. It is worth for discourse tolerant upon differences and also promoting nation to others. The interaction between the diaspora and the local community, how they adapt or integrate their culture, and also how their action in participating in their home country will be interesting to be explored from different points of view



#### Conflict of Interest

We certify that there is no conflict of interest with any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organization related to the material discussed in the manuscript.

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