Hoax and its Effects on Indonesia's Elections

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Abstract

The period leading to the general political race is often the period where people gets a great deal of data and information from different sources, particularly from the mass media who give data to the public each day, especially nearing the days of the political race. In the period paving the way to the political race, news sources don't just originate from trusted sources, and they frequently come from sources with indistinct roots. The wonder of deceptions, or hoax in Indonesia raises questions about the data that was gotten and surely confuses the general population. The rumors and false information that has been given to the public over and over again can form a public opinion that the information given is actually real and not fake news. There are three approaches to deal with foreseeing the spread of fake news in the network, these approaches are the institutional, technology and literature approaches. This research analyzes that the spread of hoax or hoax news today is increasingly worrying. The rapid development of technology is undeniably another factor in the rapid spread of the news. But on the other hand, conventional mass media which have an important role in combating hoaxes are still often carried away by hoax stories.

Keywords

INTRODUCTION

The presence of social media today has a great influence on the distribution of information related to elections. Boyd in Nasrullah (2015) defines social media as a software that allows individuals or communities to gather, share and communicate, and in certain cases collaborate with each other, while Van Dijk in Nasrullah (2015) defines social media as a media platform that focuses on the existence of users who facilitate them to move and collaborate with each other. In light of the above definition, we can conclude that the presence of media has a great influence on how information is exchanged and spread, whether it be fake news or a real one. Today, the spread of fabrications or deceptions, particularly during the political race time frame, is a significant concern due to simple access to the internet and social media.

Scam news cases in Indonesia, which are considered to cause problems, always seem to rise in numbers during the Presidential Election or the Regional Head Election. One example of this is during the 2019 Presidential Election. At that time so much fake news was spread in the public that the Indonesian Press Council stated that hoax news in Indonesia has reached a serious stage. Moreover, hoaxes have a very broad reach, ranging from news articles to throw shade and to those that are published through official information media. At the beginning, the public looked for the truth of the information that was given from the media. But right now, hoax news has entered a new dimension on social media and is adopted easily without any clarifications beforehand.

In the Oxford dictionary (2017), hoaxes are defined as a form of fraud whose purpose is to make jokes or bring danger. Hoaxes in Indonesian means false news, false information or simply just lies. The term that is similar to hoaxed in journalism is libel, which is false news, not true which leads to defamation cases. Hoax is a word that is used to indicate false coverage or attempts to deceive and trick the readers into believing something. Preaching that is not based on reality or truth (nonfactual) for a particular purpose. The purpose of a hoax is to joke, to play around until it eventually forms a public opinion. The point is that hoaxes are misguided and misleading, especially if internet users aren't critical and directly share the news that is read to other users.

The Mastel Survey (2017) revealed that of 1,146 respondents, 44.3% of them received hoax news every day and 17.2% received more than once a day. What makes things worse is that mass media that should be trusted are sometimes involved in the spread of hoax news. The percentage of mass media which is one of the hoax news spreaders is radio by 1.20%, print media by 5% and television is the largest with 8.70%.

Apart from the mass media, of course hoaxes are also widely circulated in the community through online or social media as explained above. The results of research conducted by Mastel (2017) states that the platforms that are widely used in hoax news distributions are web sites, amounting to 34.90%, chat applications

(WhatsApp, Line, Telegram) by 62.80% and through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Path) which are platforms for spreading hoax news with the highest percentage reaching 92.40%. The data released by the Ministry of Communication and Information stated that there are 800 thousand sites in Indonesia that are indicated as spreaders of hoaxes and hate speech (Pratama, 2006; Aldoghan, 2021; Danielle & Masilela, 2020; Dlalisa & Govender, 2020).

In addition to the researches above, there are various other studies that can support the analysis that I did, for example the research conducted by DailySocial.id, a technology blog from Jakarta, which works with the Jakpat Mobile Survey Platform. This research asked about the distribution of hoax content in digital platforms to 2,032 respondents. From the results of this study, it was noted that as much as 44.19% of respondents claimed that they were unsure that they have the skills in detecting hoax news, while other respondents, 51.03%, chose to remain silent (and not believe) when they encountered hoax content. This research also notes that 73% of respondents read all information in their entirety. However, only 55% verify the facts about the accuracy of the news they heard or read. The results of the research are also supported by a 2016 UNESCO study of 61 countries in the world, the results of a study published under the title "The World's Most Literate Nations", showing Indonesia ranked 60th, only one level above Botswana.

One more study that is important is the survey conducted by APJII regarding people's dependence on the internet, especially social media. Based on a survey conducted by APJII in 2012, high intensity internet users are those who have a high level of education, meaning the higher the level of education, the more often the intensity of them accessing the internet (APJII, 2012).

Based on this background, an interesting thing to study more deeply is about the interaction of hoax communication that occurs on social media. Considering social media is the most widely used media in hoax distribution, this communication interaction concerns the sender and receiver of hoax messages, the medium used, the content of the message and the determination of the environment and time that are closely related to the production process, the distribution and the impact of the hoax for the community. Therefore the problem formulation in this study is how do the interaction of hoax communication on social media and the anticipation of hoaxes work? The purpose of this study is to get an overview of the interaction of hoax communication on social media and how to anticipate hoaxes.

Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) also conducted a study entitled 'Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election´ that social media platforms like Facebook have a very different structure from previous media technologies (mainstream media). Content on social media can be delivered between users without third party filtering, fact checking, or editorial judgment. The average US adult reads and remembers the order of one or several fake news articles during the election period, with a higher exposure to pro-Trump articles than pro-Clinton articles and how much impact the results of this election depend on the effectiveness of hoax exposure in changing the way people choose.

Research on hoaxes has been conducted by Situngkir (2017) with the title "Spread of Hoax in Social Media". This study discusses how to spread hoaxes as gossip and rumors on Twitter, by observing empirical cases in Indonesia. This study also discusses the factors of the spread of gossip on social media and looks at the epidemiology of propagation deception before and after deception is clarified in conventional mass media. The results of the study concluded that Twitter, as a micro-blogging service, is one of the most effective medias to spread news from person to person at a speed comparable to conventional mass media. Hoax has a large population coverage in five to six tweets, and potentially exponentially bigger, unless conventional media stop the spread of the hoax.

Pepitone (in Westerman, Spence, & Heide, 2013) also said that social media is considered as a technology whose use is increasing as a source of information. While Villanueva said that social media is a part of the internet that gives everyone the power to inform their ideas to others, both interpersonally and to many people (Winkelmann, 2012). According to Susanto (2011) there is a problem, namely the party that should be trusted and how to filter information so that it is useful for the reader. Unclear sources of information and diversity of information that leads to the hoax tends to become terror.

This research is considered important because it can fill in the shortcomings of several previous studies that have not seen the impact of hoaxes in the implementation of elections in Indonesia. Several studies that examine hoaxes focus more on the spread of hoaxes on social media, and other studies examine the spread of hoaxes on social media which triggers the stronger polarization of supporters and the way people choose in the presidential election in the United States.

LITERATURE STUDY

Interpersonal Communication

The definition of communication according to Rogers is a process where an idea is transferred from one source to other sources with the purpose of changing behavior. Then this definition was developed by Rogers with Kincaid so that it resulted in a new definition where communication is a process where two or more people form or exchange information with each other, which in turn will arrive at a deep mutual understanding.

Communication is divided into several types, one of them is interpersonal communication. In general. Interpersonal communication is defined as the exchanging of meaning between those who communicate (Cangara, 2018:163). According to Barnlund (in Ningsih, 2015), interpersonal communication is always related to two, three, or maybe four people who meet spontaneously without structure. However, according to Nurudin (in Ningsih, 2015), interpersonal communication is a communication process done face-to-face that is conducted by two or more people. But with the rise of technology today, interpersonal

communication can't be limited to face-to-face only, but also with communication media such as smartphones and such. Interpersonal communication that is done before is a communication method that is done face-to-face, but today it could be done through devices and tools. The situation in which all forms of communication and human behavior can be changed by exchanging information through this media is called Computer-Mediated Communication.

Social Media

Boyd (in Nasrullah, 2015: 11) describes social media as a collection of software that allows individuals and communities to gather, share, communicate, and in certain cases collaborate or play with each other. Social media has the power of user-generated content (UGC) where content is produced by users, not by editors as in mass media institutions.

According to Van Dijk (in Nasrullah, 2015: 11), social media is a media platform that focuses on the existence of users who facilitate them in their activities and collaborations. Therefore, social media can be seen as an online medium (facilitator) that strengthens the relationship between users as well as a social bond. Meike and Young (in Nasrullah, 2015: 11) interpret the word social media as a convergence between personal communication in the sense of sharing between individuals (to be shared one-to-one) and public media to share with anyone without individual specificity.

New Media Theory

Pierre Levy (in Putri, 2014) suggested that new media is a theory that discusses media development. McQuail (2011: 152) stated that new media are various communication technology devices that share the same characteristics which are also made possible by digitalization and its wide availability for personal use as a communication tool. This theory discusses the media in the global era. The term new media refers to requests for access to content (content/information) anytime, anywhere, on any digital device. The main characteristics of new media are interconnectedness, access to individual audiences as recipients and senders of messages, interactivity, diverse uses as open characters, and their ubiquitous nature (McQuail, 2011: 43).

According to R Cahyo Prabowo (in Putri, 2014), new media is a tool as a means of communication where interacting, arguing, exchanging information, and knowing news through internet network channels and information is always the latest in a flash and also more efficient and concise when providing information to the reader or the audience.

METHOD

This study uses a research method with a qualitative approach that aims to determine and search, collect, process and analyze research data. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative research is an effort made by working with data,

organizing data, breaking it down into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching and finding patterns, finding what is important and what is learned, and deciding what can be told to others. Based on the above definition it can be concluded that the initial step of data analysis is gathering existing data, compiling it in full, managing, and analyzing (Moleong, 2007).

Based on Mastel's research results (2017), the type of hoax that is most often accepted by the public is the socio-political sector (local elections, government) and SARA issues. Based on the data above, the research subjects in this study are cases in the form of information/news and also pictures of hoaxes.

Data collection techniques consist of two parts, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from observation, whereas secondary data is data obtained from data collection techniques that support primary data. In this study, secondary data were obtained from various sources through other media both online and mainstream media as well as literature and journals. After the data is collected, data analysis is done by coding data based on the research categories sought. The results of data collection are then analyzed descriptively. Triangulation was also carried out in this study to enrich the results of the analysis by comparing the results of the research with concepts and theories as well as the results of previous studies.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Institutional Approach

Hoaxes are produced as if they came from a well-known news site, thereby contributing to public trust in the news. This news or information is then modified by hoax makers and then redistributed through social media, a place where many users can immediately read the message. There are three important approaches needed to anticipate the spread of hoax news in the community, namely the institutional, technological and literacy approaches. An institutional approach, by continuing to promote the anti-hoax community. From a technological approach, the hoax checker application can be used by the public to check the truth of news that is indicated by hoaxes. The literacy approach, with the anti hoax news movement and socialization of the community ranging from schools to the general public, is promoted and promoted, not only by the government but also by all levels of society including other non-government institutions.

The results of this study also illustrate that hoaxes are produced to the loss of certain parties with hatred and hostility. The results of this study also show that social structures are formed in the process of spreading hoaxes on social media. According to Fuchs (2014: 78-79) social structure is inseparable from strength or power. Among these forces are divided into economic and political forces. Economic power is the control of or the control over the use of values and resources produced, distributed or consumed. In this case, there are certain parties who play an important role behind the process of spreading this hoax. Whereas political power is the involvement of collective decisions that determine aspects of the life of a

community and certain social systems. If political power in social media is asymmetrically distributed, special classes or groups have the power to decide. However, if political power in social media is distributed symmetrically, every user or everyone on social media has the opportunity to be involved in decision making. In this study, it was decided to be involved in the process of producing hoax messages and their dissemination.

The fact in this study that the contents of a hoax that has a certain content (hatred and slander) is aimed at certain parties and is also consistent with what was conveyed by Silverman; that the hoax was made to attract the hopes and fears of people who are not limited to reality. Whereas reality should provide a limit on which news can be shared and which can't be shared in public space. Silverman's research results also revealed that the more rumors were spread, the more plausible and the more chance it could change the minds and opinions of the public (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2016). Especially if the hoax is aimed at parties who are fighting in the elections.

The widespread and repeated hoaxes can form public opinion toward a candidate in political contestation. The same thing happened during the last US presidential election. The results of research conducted by Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) conclude that the average US adult reads and remembers the order of one or several false news articles during the election period, with higher exposure to pro-Trump articles than pro-Clinton articles. This shows how big the impact of the results of this election depends on the effectiveness of hoax exposure in changing the way people vote. And the hoax is actually read by many users from social media.

Technological Approach

According to the online communication model stated in CMC Interactivity Model (Mahmoud & Auter, 2009), media is a condition for the existence of media or channels to facilitate the process of interaction between users. The results of research with the three case examples above use social media (Facebook and Twitter) as hoax distribution media. This is due to the ease of using this media, anytime and anywhere and the very wide spreadability. Nasrullah (2015) said that social media is a media that has special characteristics that are used in various fields such as journalism, public relations, and marketing, including politics. The characteristics of social media are networked, informative, there are archives, there are interactions, images of social simulations and information content or content produced by users. These characteristics also make social media the easiest and fastest way to spread hoaxes.

Maulana & Situngkir (2010) have an opinion that Twitter, for example, is a media for spreading gossip, rumors or hoaxes spatially and chronologically, because it has a unique community structure. A gossip about a community leader in Indonesia reportedly died reached more than 50,000 readers who were tweeted by 59 social actors in various cities only about two hours before it was discovered that the news was not true. One does not have to have thousands of Twitter

followers to upload questions about whether a public figure has died, and within minutes, this news has been responded to by thousands of people by writing statements of sympathy and condolences.

The speed with which hoax messages circulate is inseparable from the characteristics of the social network. Social media is built from social structures formed in networks or the internet. However, as Castells (2002) said, social structures or organizations that are formed on the internet are based on information networks that basically operate based on information technology in microelectronics. Networks formed between users are networks that are technology mediated by technology devices. In the case of this research hoax, a social network formed due to the similarity of the goals of users (senders and recipients of messages) both to bring down the candidates, which is responded as a defense of hoax objects.

While the social characteristics that are built up therein are forming a network among users. Leaving aside whether in the real world between users know each other or not (Nasrulah, 2016). This can be seen from the results of this study, where the sender and recipient of the message may be people who know each other in reality or not. However, they were brought together in a similarity in social characteristics. The presence of social media provides a medium for users to be connected in a technological mechanism. The network formed between users will eventually form a community or society that consciously or not, will bring up the values that exist in the community (Nasrulah, 2016).

Hoax content production is fully the ability of users to either create, change, modify, and to spread through social media. As stated by Lister et al., (2003), that in social media, content is fully owned and based on the contribution of users or account holders, this is called user generated content (UGC). UGC is a symbiotic relationship in a new media culture that gives users the opportunity and flexibility to participate. Jenkins (2002) also believes that new media, including social media, offer tools or new technological tools that enable audiences (consumers) to archive, provide information, adjust and re-circulate media content called do-it-yourself. Meaning, what happened in this hoax case, the real message is easily changed, replaced and then distributed again.

Benkler (2012) and Cross (2011) have the opinion that the sharing factor is another character of social media. This media not only produces content that is built from and consumed by its users, but is also distributed and developed by its users. This shows that the public is actively spreading the contents of the message while developing it. The contents of messages that are distributed then commented on, are also added data or the latest facts. In the case of hoaxes, the development of the message content of this user makes the true contents of the message blurred and it is as if the contents of the hoax's message are true, because it's getting lots of supporting comments accompanied by data and facts is hoax or fake as well.

The years 2016 and 2017 were the years where hoaxes were spread the most in Indonesia, one of the reasons is during the local elections of DKI Jakarta which got huge attention from the public. Because of this, President Joko Widodo

sternly ordered all parties to stop the spreading of hoaxes because it has caused an inconvenience to the public. Hoax is a serious problem in communication ethics because it can damage the opponent's image. All hoax news not only harms the hoax subject but also attacks and destroys the ethical order in society, it can even become a killing machine for one's character. Hoax is a serious problem in communication ethics because it can damage the opponent's image.

Ryan Ariesta as cited by Juditha (2018) said that the right solution to reduce the impact of hoaxes is to first be careful with provocative headlines or information, because every title that contains it will make it easy for people to be quickly provoked. Second, be mindful of news sources. It is important to provide knowledge to the public so that they always see whether the source of the news occurred in the past, or only comes from unclear sources. Third, check the facts and authenticity of a news, because news is an information that contains factual and actual, the public is expected to see that the news contains a fact that is relevant and with sufficient data. Authenticity is also important in choosing news. The public should not be easily fooled by news that is only a provocative act on social media.

CONCLUSION

Based on a series of studies above, it can be concluded also that the spread of hoax or hoax news today is increasingly worrying. The rapid development of technology is undeniably another factor in the rapid spread of the news. But on the other hand, conventional mass medias which have an important role in combating hoaxes are still often carried away by hoax stories. This can be exploited by certain elements, especially during the general election to instill hatred and slander. This is done because the Indonesian people have a tendency to believe in hoax news, which can be clearly seen from the series of studies above. So it is natural that in the following elections the same strategy will be carried out, namely spreading slander and hatred through hoax news because so far, I feel that it is effective to do to the people of Indonesia. As for students who should be able to be wiser in choosing information, they also have a tendency to believe hoax news, such as the results of a survey above that states the level of education influences internet usage. With the high use of the internet used by students, it's only natural that there are more hoax news that they will get. With so many hoax news received, students should do more fact checking. However, this is inversely proportional to the results of UNESCO's study, which states that the interest of Indonesian people's literacy is still far below that of other countries. Based on the series of analyzes above, I can conclude that the tendency of students to accept and trust hoax news is higher than other groups, especially in the period leading up to the Presidential or Regional Head Election.

The research recommendations are also aimed at the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) to form an independent body that checks whether the news is hoaxed or not. The agency at the same time

manages hoax checking applications that are accessed to all online media, activates cyber GPR to share information against hoax news at every central government agency up to the local level, minimizes the existence of anonymous accounts by means of verification of digital accounts using the original identity of the Indonesian people, especially on the website or internet services with high data traffic. All institutions, both government and private, are advised to continue increasing their anti-hoax campaign efforts and supporting positive content for the community. Another effort that can be taken is to pursue digital literacy for students and the general public on an ongoing basis.

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