ANALYSIS OF THE SPREAD OF HOAXES IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION (CASE STUDY: CONTENT ON TIKTOK SOCIAL MEDIA)

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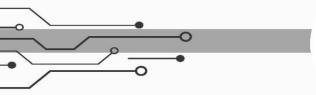
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ABSTRACT

The development of technology in today's era has significantly influenced the way society utilizes it for communication purposes, including through telephones, emails, and social media platforms. Currently, the social media platform TikTok has gained immense popularity among users. This study employs a qualitative descriptive research method aimed at analyzing and describing the dissemination of hoax information on TikTok. Data analysis is conducted using the interactive model by Miles and Huberman, which involves data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The study reveals that political hoaxes spread rapidly on TikTok, with patterns similar to user-generated content where individuals deliberately share new and seemingly truthful information. This research was conducted in Kayuagung City. The research informants consisted of several Tiktok accounts with data collection techniques used in the form of observation, interviews and documentation.

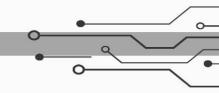*Keywords:* *Social media TikTok: spread of hoaxes, politics..*

1. INTRODUCTION

The spread of information today predominantly occurs through online media. The ease of disseminating information via digital platforms has led to challenges in filtering and verifying its accuracy. The absence of editorial oversight on these platforms allows anyone with internet access to disseminate information, including anonymous content, resulting in the rapid spread of hoaxes.

A hoax is defined as information that lacks factual certainty. While media serve to shape, collect, and disseminate information to facilitate

public understanding of political issues, social media comments often trend toward criticism or hate speech, marking the beginning of misuse. The rise of hoaxes has caused public unease in Indonesia, with Bram Biantoro (2016) identifying four dangers of hoaxes: wasting time and money, diverting issues, deceiving the public, and inducing panic. The public's tendency to believe unverified information contributes to the rapid proliferation of such content.
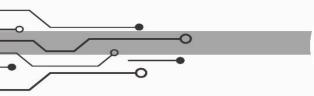
Technological advancements, including the internet, have fundamentally transformed communication (Jordan & Putri, 2020). While these technologies offer numerous benefits, their misuse by irresponsible parties to spread hoaxes undermines these advantages (Pranesti & Arifin, 2019). The susceptibility of society to hoaxes stems from low literacy levels and the tendency to accept and disseminate information without verification. This study focuses on the dissemination patterns of political hoaxes on TikTok, particularly during democratic events in Indonesia, such as elections.
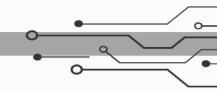
2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate depiction of the phenomenon under investigation (Moleong, 2007). Data collection methods include observations of TikTok's hoax dissemination patterns, interviews with informants, and documentation review. Data analysis follows Miles and Huberman's (1984) interactive model, encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Spreading hoaxes is a detrimental and dangerous activity in today's digital era. One of the most widely used social media today is Tiktok. Tiktok actually contains hoax news with the discovery of a video claiming that the General Election Results (KPU). The video is accompanied by the narrative "This is the KPU data for the 2024 Election" Amazing, this country is indeed sacred, the voting has not been done, the results have

been determined?" In fact, all hoax news was reported from medcom.id. The claim that the 2024 election results have been prepared by the KPU is false.

There is also news circulating about the digital image of the 2024 General Election (Pemilu) voter card on social media. In the circulating image, the voter card with the General Election Commission (KPU) logo on the right contains personal identity data ranging from name, gender, to Polling Station (TPS) code. This blue voter card is also said to be available in physical form or via the Ministry of Home Affairs (Kemendagri) application.
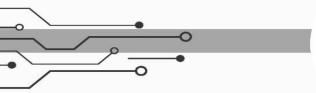
In fact, all hoax news reported by New Detik.com, KPU denied having issued voter cards. In accordance with the Election Law, KPU has no duty or authority to create and issue voter cards.

Opinion manipulation to reduce public trust in election organizers can be seen from fake news about KPU data and digital voter cards. The tendency of society when information is in accordance with their beliefs and attitudes, then they will spread the hoax information easily, without regard to the truth of the news. And it is certain that the news will reduce the trust and integrity of election organizers in the eyes of the public.
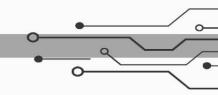
Hoaxes aimed at election organizers form the goal of forming public opinion, as well as reducing public trust in the election results. In my opinion, hoax spreaders are not always deliberate factors but also occur because internet users do not check the news, so that user groups have massive thoughts. The impact of hoax news is that public trust in organizers decreases although this can be overcome by rebuilding public trust by creating positive news.

The results of this study were obtained by conducting observation techniques on the behavior of TikTok users and conducting direct interviews with several informants in the field, then the results were collected and analyzed by researchers.

Hoax or false information has become a phenomenon in Indonesia that is deliberately disguised to look true. This is inseparable from the characteristics of people who use a lot of social media. The government should start to seriously handle the spread of hoax news like this. The

Indonesian government has made regulations regarding the spread of fake news that is intentionally spread so that it causes losses for the party that is being hit. Until now, active Tiktok users are increasing. Thus, every day people receive news and information quickly through social media devices.
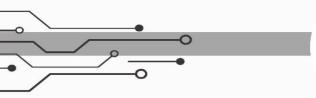
Social media and instant messaging applications (chat apps) are favorite media. There is a main factor that causes false information (hoaxes) to spread easily in Indonesia. That factor is the original character of the community who are considered not accustomed to differing opinions or healthy democracy. This condition is one of the factors that makes it easy for people to swallow hoaxes that are spread intentionally. Since ancient times, Indonesians have loved to gather and tell stories. Unfortunately, what is being discussed is not necessarily true. Because this collectivist culture is not accompanied by the ability to process data. In my opinion, most people are not used to recording and storing data so they often talk without data. On the other hand, people prefer to discuss aspects related to drama, intrigue and mystery.

Politics is a field that has these aspects. So hoaxes often occur in political themes. Especially when there is a power struggle that brings down opponents such as regional elections, for example there is a trend of increasing hoaxes approaching the Regional Head Election (Pilkada), but the trend will decrease after the Pilkada is over.
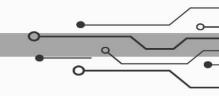
The following are the results of my interview with the resource person Aldi on April 30, 2024. Aldi is a Tiktok user who is active in the Karang Taruna organization and stated that:

> *"Political motives are the main reason for spreading hoaxes aimed at election participants. The goal is to bring down political opponents and hope that the public will support the message giver. The spread of hoaxes on social media and online media does not just happen without any underlying interests. There are interests behind it, whether it is political power, economic and business hoaxes, personal sentiments and just for fun."*

> *"According to Aldi, spreading hoaxes is a detrimental and dangerous activity in the current digital era. Hoaxes can cause fear, distrust and influence public*

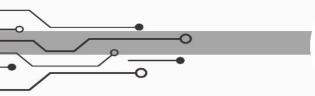*opinion. My opinion is that the spread of hoaxes must be handled firmly and considered an unethical act."*

Furthermore, the results of my interview with Mr. Ricard, a TikTok user who is active as a radio announcer in Kayuagung on May 7, stated that.

"Political and SARA issues are the most frequently raised as material for hoax content. Sensitive issues about social, political, ethnic, religious, racial and inter-group issues. Used by hoax spreaders to influence public opinion as much as 90% he said that most often receive hoax content about socio-politics, such as regional head elections and government. Not much different from politics, SARA issues are in second place with 80%."
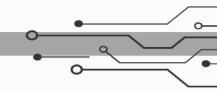
"According to Ricard, the spread of hoaxes is often motivated by the intention to influence public opinion or to achieve certain goals. This can damage public trust in the information they receive and disrupt social cooperation. One of the reasons why hoaxes spread easily is because of the popularity of social media and the ease of sharing information through TikTok. Many people only read the headline or summary of the news without verifying its truth, thus strengthening the spread of hoaxes."

"The amount of information in the media that reports the form of hoax content that is most widely received by respondents is text at 60%, while the rest is in the form of images at 40%. As many as 90% of respondents stated that they received hoax content through Tiktok social media. This figure is quite far compared to websites, print media television, email and radio which average only 20%. This is because people like things that are sensational and are basically very dangerous, because this can become behavior. Social media users can produce hoaxes in order to cause a commotion."

"Ricard explained that to overcome the spread of hoaxes, it is important for us as internet users to be more critical and vigilant about the information we receive. In my opinion, there are several steps we must take before receiving hoax news, namely making sure the information we receive comes from a trusted and accountable source. Verify the information by looking for other sources that can validate its truth. Next, we check the facts and do not immediately share the information. Before sharing information with others, make sure that the information is accurate and reliable. Do not be part of the

chain of spreading hoaxes by accidentally spreading incorrect information. Increase literacy and teach others how to recognize and avoid the spread of hoaxes. Next, in my opinion. Report hoaxes if we find information that is clearly a hoax, report it to the relevant platform or website so that it can be deleted or followed up immediately.

The next resource person was Mr. Adenan on May 14, 2023. He is an active TikTok user who works as an intelligence officer for the police in Kayuagung City.
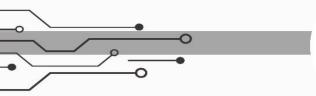
"Basically, many people who receive hoaxes don't just believe them and check the truth first, but some of them still have difficulty in finding references. And until now, information from the police stated. The police have received at least 40 thousand reports of fake news alias hoaxes that have been spread on social media. According to the report, around 20% have been responded to by the Cyber Crime team of the National Police Headquarters, he said.

"The law must also be strengthened to protect the public from the spread of hoaxes. Hoax spreaders must be identified and given strict sanctions to serve as a deterrent for others who have the potential to do the same. We must also tighten supervision and hold awareness campaigns regarding the dangers of spreading hoaxes," he said.
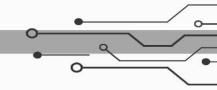
"According to Mr. Adenan, in the era of information that is so fast and wide like today, it is our responsibility to combat the spread of hoaxes. Hoaxes that are distributed through social media TikTok seem unstoppable, plus the participation of buzzers from outside parties and people who have less literacy also participate in the Hoax user group."

I think by increasing information literacy, requiring social media platforms to be responsible and strengthening existing laws, we can reduce the negative impact of the spread of hoaxes and build a society that is smarter and more critical of the information we receive.

In my opinion, overall, the spread of hoaxes is a serious problem that affects the trust and stability of society. The spread of hoaxes is a detrimental and dangerous activity in today's digital era. Hoaxes can cause fear, distrust and influence public opinion. My opinion is that the

spread of hoaxes must be dealt with firmly and considered an unethical act.

The following is the result of my interview on May 21, 2024 with Mrs. Rosa. This source is a Tiktok user who works as a teacher. She also said that
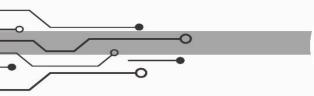
"The spread of hoaxes is often motivated by the intention to influence public opinion or achieve certain goals. This can damage public trust in the information we receive and disrupt social cooperation, especially in the political world. One of the reasons why hoaxes spread easily is because of the popularity of social media and the ease of sharing information through these platforms. Many people only read the headline or summary of the news without verifying its truth, thus strengthening the spread of hoaxes."

"In my opinion, there are several steps we must take to overcome the spread of hoaxes. The first is to make sure that the source of information we receive comes from a trusted source and can be accounted for, especially the spread of political news issues that both want to show or win the hearts of the public in the campaign carried out by each candidate." Said Mrs. Rosa
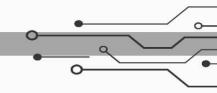
According to Mrs. Rosa. There are several factors in the spread of hoaxes on social media such as lack of parental supervision, parental supervision plays an important role in educating the generation, because social media has a very bad impact if we use it wrongly, parents can provide advice or teach their children how to use social media properly.

"It is undeniable that our society has minimal interest in reading, this is where someone is easily fooled by hoaxes, because they are lazy to look for real or accurate information. Is the news really happening according to the facts on the ground or not. He said.

According to Mrs. Rosa, to avoid hoaxes, what needs to be done is to increase literacy, provide easy access to correct sources of information on every hoax issue. Conduct systematic and continuous education and effective legal action for the cause.
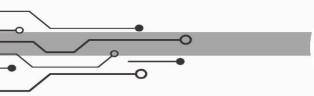
"In my opinion, there are several ways to identify hoax and genuine news, namely by being thorough and careful in reading information, especially in provocative titles. Do not just spread information that is not yet clear about its truth, carefully examine the address of the internet site/ website, join an anti-hoax group. Carefully check the truth of the facts with the original news source"

Based on the information obtained from the four informants, it can be concluded that the public is required to have good literacy so that they do not easily believe in fake news. How to respond in taking action can be seen from human attitudes towards something. Knowledge and habits are responses to actions. There are three points that explain that the spread of hoax news can be seen from knowledge in recognizing hoax news, understanding the behavior that will be carried out towards hoax news and being able to distinguish between valid news and hoax news. The pattern of spreading fake news or hoaxes on social media is still the same. Some of them are reposting photos or videos that already exist, then linking them to new events or incidents.
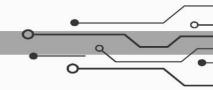
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The spread of hoaxes is often motivated by the intention to influence public opinion or to achieve certain goals. This can damage public trust in the information they receive and disrupt social cooperation. One of the reasons why hoaxes spread easily is because of the popularity of social media and the ease of sharing information through these platforms. Many people only read the headline or summary of the news without verifying its truth, thus strengthening the spread of hoaxes. Therefore, steps must be taken to overcome the spread of hoaxes

First, it is important to improve people's information literacy so that they can distinguish between valid information and hoaxes. Education about reliable sources of information, methods of verifying facts and critical thinking should be provided to everyone, both in schools and in the workplace.
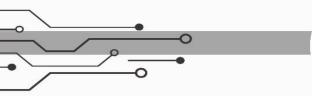
Second, the social media platform Tiktok and search engines must be responsible in dealing with the spread of hoaxes. They must have strict policies against invalid content and carry out filtration to prevent the spread of hoaxes. In addition, users must also report suspicious or invalid content so that it can be identified and removed.

Third, the law must also be strengthened to protect the public from the spread of hoaxes. The perpetrators of the spread of hoaxes must be identified and be subject to strict sanctions to serve as a deterrent for others who have the potential to do the same thing. The government must also tighten supervision and hold awareness campaigns regarding the dangers of spreading hoaxes.
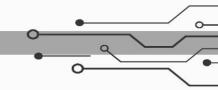
In an era of information that is so fast and broad as it is now, it is our responsibility to combat the spread of hoaxes. By increasing information literacy, requiring social media platforms to be responsible and strengthening existing laws, we can reduce the negative impact of the spread of hoaxes and build a society that is smarter and more critical of the information they receive.

To overcome the spread of hoaxes, it is important for us as internet users to be more critical and alert to the information we receive. Some steps that can be taken include:

1. Check the source of information: make sure the information we receive comes from a trusted and accountable source. Verify the information by looking for other sources that can validate its truth

2. Check the facts: if we are in doubt about the truth of information, find out more before sharing it. Use a website or platform that specifically provides verifiable facts.

3. Do not share information immediately: Before sharing information with others, make sure that the information is accurate and reliable. Do not be part of the hoax chain by accidentally spreading false information.

4. Educate yourself and others; Increase digital literacy and teach others how to recognize and avoid the spread of hoaxes.

Sharing knowledge and correct information can help reduce the spread of hoaxes in society.

5. Report hoaxes: If we find information that is clearly a hoax, report it to the relevant platform or website so that it can be immediately deleted or followed up on.
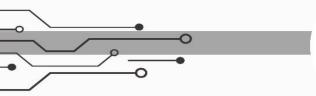
4. CLOSING

Overall, it can be concluded that the spread of Hoax message about politics through social media occurs very quickly with a similar pattern. In general, the pattern of spreading hoax messages through social media itself is intentionally spreading to others with the aim of providing new and correct information. Therefore, steps must be taken to overcome the spread of hoaxes.

First, it is important to improve people's information literacy so that they can distinguish between valid information and hoaxes. Education about reliable sources of information, methods of verifying facts, and critical thinking should be provided to everyone both in schools and in the workplace.
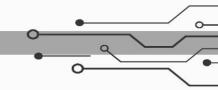
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Third, the law must also be strengthened to protect the public from the spread of hoaxes. Hoax spreaders must be identified and given strict sanctions to serve as a deterrent for others who have the potential to do the same. The government must also tighten supervision and hold awareness campaigns regarding the dangers of hoax spread.

In an era of such rapid and widespread information like today, it is our responsibility to combat the spread of hoaxes. By increasing information literacy, requiring social media platforms to be responsible and strengthening existing laws, we can reduce the negative impact of the spread of hoaxes and build a society that is smarter and more critical of the information they receive.
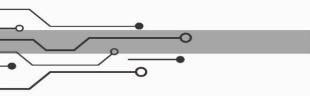
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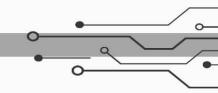
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6. Overall, the spread of hoaxes is a serious problem that affects the trust and stability of society

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