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STUDY OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF FAKE NEWS (HOAX) THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA RELATED TO THE COVID-19 VACCINE AND PREVENTION EFFORTS TO SUPPORT MASS EXECUTION VACCINE IN INDONESIA

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has been going on in Indonesia for more than a year since the beginning of 2020. This pandemic has certainly had many negative impacts, both macro, and micro. The Indonesian government has made a lot of efforts to tackle this pandemic both operationally and in socialization to reduce the further spread of vaccine efforts throughout Indonesia. But unfortunately, there is the challenge of spreading fake news related to the COVID-19 vaccine that is troubling the public. The spread of fake news happened quite quickly with digital communication using social media. Research using qualitative methods examines the condition of socialization communication related to the COVID-19 vaccine, fake news, and efforts to overcome it through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The results of the study show that there has been a lot of communication and socialization carried out by the government regarding the COVID-19 vaccine but it has not been structured in one source and there is still minimal anticipation of fake news. As a result, a lot of fake news has spread widely in the community regarding COVID-19, starting from issues related to health and beyond health or safety. Efforts that can be made to minimize the spread of fake news and its dangers include collaboration with various stakeholders, mass and periodic socialization and education on various social media channels, strict penalties for spreading fake news, providing social media platforms or channels to file complaints, create educational content and creative counter-narrative.

Keywords:
COVID-19, Fake News, Social Media, Vaccines

Introduction

The problem of the COVID-19 pandemic has been going on for almost 1 year since the beginning of 2019. Since then the activities of the state, especially the Indonesian economy, can be reported to have slowed down by 2.1% at the end of March 2020 (ADB Outlook, 2020) The public is busy with how to heal the sick, maintain the healthy and avoid COVID-19. The existence of a campaign using masks, washing hands, keeping your distance, avoiding gatherings/crowds, and prohibiting going out of the house if no important reasons are causing all activities, especially people's lifestyles to change, which has a very impact on the individual economy and the Indonesian state or even the world. Virtually all state finances are diverted to social assistance and public medical assistance so that we do not fall into an even deeper economic abyss and cause an economic crisis. The Indonesian government has decided not to lock down (completely shut down) so that until now the wheels of activity and the economy are still under control even though Indonesia has experienced a recession.

However, prevention of the COVID-19 virus must be obtained immediately so that a "normal" or conducive life can resume. Since this virus has attacked China, then Europe, America, Asia, until now no country has escaped the spread of this virus. Vaccines are a way out so that people can reduce and even eliminate this virus. Since mid-2019, the Indonesian government has been actively seeking various sources of vaccines in various parts of the world. The government must compete with other countries to get as many sources of vaccines as possible considering the population in Indonesia reaches more than 250 million people. Since the end of December 2019, several vaccines have arrived in Indonesia where over the next 15 months it is hoped that gradually, the public will start vaccinating. Either for free or independently.

One of the things that affect the success of vaccines in Indonesia from an operational perspective is government communication, especially in convincing the public of the importance and safety of the COVID-19 vaccine. Government communication related to vaccines is very important considering the safety and health of the nation lies in the issue of the success of this vaccine being carried out. The government's job will be difficult if public communication regarding vaccines is not good and smooth. Moreover, some parties have been opposing the government who refuse to be vaccinated either consciously or influenced by the large number of hoaxes circulating deliberately to disrupt the running of the government (Yustitia and Asharianto, 2020).

The government must follow the changes in the pattern of public communication that recently changed to social media, especially considering that the internet can be easily accessed from anywhere. The use of the internet has increased in line with the appeal to "just stay at home" making social media increasingly a powerful weapon in providing information (Lekik, Palinggi, and Ranteallo, 2020). On the other hand, there is also a negative side, namely that all kinds of news, especially hoaxes, can be spread because there is no strict control such as an editor who can sort which news is allowed and which cannot be circulated or news can be confusing. confusing (Setiawan, Pawito, and Hastarjo, 2020).

Examples of news that can confuse or raise questions for the public. On January 4, 2021, it was conveyed to the public that the President would be injected with the Corona vaccine on January 13, 2020. BPOM will seek an emergency use permit or EUA as soon as possible (Sagita, 2021). On the same day, a few hours apart, BPOM stated that the Sinovac vaccine cannot be injected even though it has been distributed because it has not obtained an emergency use permit or EUA (Sari, 2021). One of the issues that became an issue was when the President was about to be vaccinated, but the vaccine was still not licensed. The vaccine has been distributed to the regions but cannot be injected. News like this should be responded well, to not confuse the public so that people can be more confident and comfortable to be vaccinated. The use of social media by the government is very necessary to prevent spreading fake news (hoaxes) related to vaccines by still providing official and one-door news. The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association reported an increase in the number of internet user penetration in Indonesia in 2018. Figure 1 shows that the total internet penetration reached 64.8%, with an increase in the number of users of 27,916,726 or 10.12% in a year and total internet users of 171,176,717 users (APJII, 2018).

Figure 1: Internet and Social Media Users in Indonesia
Source: (We Are Social Digital Indonesia Statshot April 2020 Edition, 2020)

With the increasingly significant use of social media in spreading information both true and fake news (hoax), the government must firmly and straightforwardly prevent the spread of fake news (hoaxes) related to vaccines by increasing control from the Ministry of Informatics, the Cyber Police Agency of the Republic of Indonesia, and support. various parties in fighting fake news (hoax) so that information on the COVID-19 vaccine program can run and be well received by the public.

Problem Statement and Research Objectives
The formulation of this research problem is based on government communication to the community that does not go through one door so that, outside the opponent's or opposition's information, the public also does not get accurate information from an official source on behalf of the government. The consistency of the content submitted by the Ministry of Health and the COVID-19 Task Force in Indonesia also needs to be confirmed as well as other confusing information with the addition of hoaxes that have been deliberately recently used as a weapon against government policy, not only in problems this vaccine alone.

Therefore, government communication is very important in the success of the COVID-19 vaccine program, of course with the support of various parties and the wider community. The use of Social Media is very important as a means of communication between the government and the public so that it is right on target. So that the formulation of the problem for this research is how fake news (hoax) in Indonesia can be combated to reduce its impact and can facilitate the execution of mass vaccines in Indonesia. There are three questions answered by this study, including:

- How is the condition of communication and socialization related to the COVID-19 vaccine in Indonesia, especially through social media?
- What fake news has been spread about COVID-19 through social media?
- How can the spread of fake news be overcome so that the negative impact can be minimized?

Research objectives, in general, can make a concrete contribution to the Government of Indonesia, the COVID-19 Cluster, Community Institutions that are working to encourage the resolution of COVID-19, as well as the general public in handling public communication related to the COVID-19 vaccine so that it can run well, especially through prevention or eradication countermeasures. for false news (hoax) which is misleading. Specific research objectives are detailed as follows:

- Review communication and socialization related to the COVID-19 vaccine through social media in Indonesia
- Mapping hoaxes that have been circulating regarding the COVID-19 vaccine
- Efforts to tackle the spread of fake news (hoaxes) related to the COVID-19 vaccine and minimize its bad effects.

Literature Review

The terms hoax, fake news and post-truth have become increasingly prevalent in public discourse over the past year (Lewandowsky et al., 2017; Setyawan, 2020). The following articles discuss the growing number of misinformation and how it affects society. Post-truth appears due to decreasing social capital, increasing economic inequality, increasing polarization, decreasing trust in science, and increasingly fragmented media (McCright & Dunlap, 2017; Krisdyan, 2019; Nadzir, Seftiani, and Permana, 2019). Recognition of the impact of misinformation is growing based on previous warnings, for example by the World Economic Forum - a non-profit organization "committed to improving conditions in the world". The WEF ranked the spread of misinformation online as one of the 10 most significant problems facing the world in 2013 (cited in Lewandowsky et al., 2017).

The misinformation case that rocked the United States, for example; claims that many scientists have denied climate change since 1998 and is a hoax made by China. The denial of climate science is no longer the area of fringe conspiracy theory but a view held by senior US administration officials, including President Trump. In this alternative reality, some cases of fake news include; former resident Obama was born in Kenya, the United Nations is trying to run the New World Order or US democrats involved in child sex trafficking networks in the basement of a pizza restaurant in Washington DC (PizzaGate). Hoax news can be caused by a lack of interest in reading; the trustworthy nature of close relatives; enthusiasm to be considered the most up-to-date; obtaining information that is considered accurate from trusted people (Setyawan & Sulistyawati, 2020; McCright & Dunlap, 2017).

The dissemination of news through online media is not only carried out by communication media that already has a name but now everyone can also play a role in disseminating information. Information disseminated by individuals who are more likely not to be responsible for the accuracy of the information often contains hoax news (UI Faculty of Humanities, 2018). Vargo (2015) examines the strength of the fake news setting agenda and the fact-checking against it through displays in online medias capes. Fake news has intricate relationships with online partisan media, both in response to and setting the agenda for the problem. The emerging news media are also responsive to the fake news agenda, but to a lesser extent. The fake news coverage itself spreads out and becomes more autonomous topically. Although fact-checkers are autonomous in selecting issues to cover, they do not influence in determining the agenda of the news media as a whole, and their influence appears to be decreasing, reflecting the difficulty fact-checkers face in disseminating their corrections.

The growth of internet users from year to year is always increasing rapidly. This has an impact on the spread of hoaxes that are increasingly being carried out by internet users in Indonesia (Setyawan & Sulistyawati 2020; Lekik et al. 2019). This irresponsible party has a purpose, one of which is to lead public opinion and then form the wrong perception of the true information. Marwan (quoted in Setyawan & Sulistyawati, 2020) stated that there are four risks arising from hoax reporting, namely hoaxes to divert issues, hoaxes as a means of public fraud, hoaxes as a trigger for public panic, and hoaxes can trigger mass riots.

The cases to be raised in this study have spread throughout the world, making them a major public health challenge across health systems. At the same time, COVID-19 has triggered various kinds of rumors, misinformation and hoaxes to appear on several social media platforms. In a recent analysis of the most viewed COVID-19 YouTube videos, Li et al. (2020) found that over 25% of the most viewed videos (62 million views worldwide) about the virus contains misleading informations. The urgent issue is that fake news spreads faster on social media than from reliable sources and destroys the balance of authenticity of the news ecosystem. An example of the harm caused by improper health communication can be taken from Nigeria (Tasnim et al., 2020). Health officials discovered several cases of overdoses of Chloroquine (a drug used to treat the malaria parasite) after news of the drug's effectiveness to treat COVID-19 emerged in the media. Other rumours of a nationwide lockdown in the United States have sparked panic buying groceries and toilet paper, disrupting supply chains and exacerbating the demand-supply gap.

Fake news surrounding the virus also has been promoted by political elites, such as President Trump and Jair Bolsonaro the Brazilian President, that falsely claimed that hydroxychloroquine can be used as a treatment against the virus (Linden et al., 2020). Despite the endorsement of conspiracy theories have not been widespread, a third of the samples taken from the United Kingdom and the United States believes that the virus is produced on purpose by a powerful organization therefore its manmade (Roozenbeek et al., 2020, Freeman et al., 2020). A recent study by Uscinski et al. (2020) found that one's belief in these conspiracies is related to the propensity to reject information from expert authorities.

Setyawan & Sulistyawati (2020) explain that people who are in quarantine or isolation tend to experience psychosocial stress and adverse health outcomes, which can generate interest in learning more about the disease. However, such a situation requires a complete guarantee of the correct flow of information. This need is recognized by the World Health Organization,

which has partnered with several social media and seven major technology companies namely Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Microsoft, Reddit, Twitter, and YouTube, has agreed to expose fraud and misinformation. According to Yustitia & Asharianto (2020), in Indonesia, long before the COVID-19 pandemic, the theme of health was not free from misinformation and disinformation. Data from the Indonesian Journalists Association, 2017 (quoted in Yustitia & Asharianto, 2020) states that the most widely spread hoax is health information.

Chakraborty (2020) explains that Birkland (1997) can be used to analyse agenda setting and media policies in response to disasters. Although the proposed work does not focus on this issue, the authors would like to highlight the fundamental role of the media in maintaining global public sentiment in light of the ongoing COVID-19 related crisis. The news media need to be responsible and vigilant to ensure the dissemination of awareness and the formation of public sentiment appropriately, especially those involving agenda setting.

Agenda Setting Theory and Awareness Model
Agenda Setting was developed by Max McCombs and Donald Shaw in a study of the 1968 American presidential election. Agenda setting is a social science theory; who also tries to make predictions. This theory states that the media have a great influence on their audiences by imparting what they should think, not what they think. This means that if the news is frequently covered and stands out, the audience will consider the issue more important (McCombs et al., 2014).

McCombs (2014) explains that along with the expansion of mass media in our daily lives, it is the main source of the influence of journalism on the audience. The incidental nature of this learning, in turn, helps issues move rather quickly from the media agenda to the public agenda. The role of the agenda-setting mass media meets many other paradigms in the field of communication, including framing, priming, gatekeeping, cultivation and spiral of silence. The role of the news media agenda-setting is not limited to focusing public attention on a particular set of issues, but also influences understanding and perspectives on the topics that are reported.

There are 3 models below for analysing the "effect of agenda setting" (McCombs 2014; Dearing 1998) which are the Awareness model, the Priorities model, and the Salience model. Most investigations have centred on these three models. Different media have different potential agenda settings. From an agenda setting perspective, analysing the relationship between traditional media and new virtual spaces has seen a growing momentum. One of the most important aspects in the concept of the role of the mass communication agenda setting is the time frame for the phenomenon (McCombs et al., 2014). Much of the research on agenda setting is based on the following:
- The press and media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it;
- The concentration of the media on several issues and subjects makes the public view these issues as more important than other issues.

There are many ways to describe the agenda setting process, the simplified version used in this study is the awareness model. McCombs et al. (2014) see that the question is only about awareness (awareness) versus ignorance (ignorance). This basic and primitive notion of agenda setting is refuted. If the media doesn't tell the public about a topic or event, then in most cases it is not on our personal agenda or in our living space. But the concept of agenda-setting mainly developed empirically - urges a more detailed model, namely that among the many topics or

titles that are spread by the media, the basic differences are the same as priorities will be shifted from the media agenda to the individual agenda. Simpler than this, McCombs (2014) assesses the importance of what is considered important by the media. Media priorities belong to individual individuals. This hypothesis has been emphasized in most of the studies to date.

Methodology

The paradigm used in this research is Constructivism. This research not only wants to prove the truth or relevance of a theory to the current phenomenon but also to develop the implementation of mass communication theory and public relations in preventing the spread of false information (hoaxes), especially in the context of the COVID-19 vaccine in Indonesia. On the other hand, this research does not criticize communication or socialization related to the COVID-19 vaccine in Indonesia through social media so that the right paradigm to use is the constructivism paradigm.

This research uses a qualitative method with an inductive pattern so that researchers observe a specific object of research, namely the spread of fake news related to the COVID-19 vaccine in Indonesia through social media then leading to general theories. According to Sugiyono (2009), qualitative research methods can be used to study an object that is natural in nature with the researcher being a key element and results that emphasize meaning rather than generalization.

The focus of this research is to map the fake news that has been disseminated regarding the COVID-19 vaccine through social media by proposing measures that can be made to prevent further spread and minimize the impact of spreading fake news that exists to support the execution of the COVID-19 vaccine. 19 in Indonesia. The dimensions and elements of this research focus are mapped in Table 1 below:

Table 1. The Dimensions And Elements Of The Research Focus

Dimensions	Element	Data collection technique
Fake news (hoax)	- Content type - Spread media - Possible causes of belief in fake news related to COVID-19	- In-depth interviews - FGD - Secondary data
Social media communication strategy	- Communication strategy with social media - Institutions or organizations that need to be linked and collaborate	

Neumann (2006) states that several things that can be done to obtain qualitative data in a study, such as documenting real events, covering things someone is talking about by observing the words used; tone; to gestures, observation of specific behaviours, group discussions, to studying written documents and examining visual images. For this research, two types of data will be used, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is obtained from in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions, while secondary data is obtained from government

reports regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, documentation from the COVID-19 Task Force, related journals or predecessor research, as well as news circulating in Indonesia.

To achieve the objectives of data collection through in-depth interviews, the selection of sources was carried out by first determining the appropriate resource criteria for this study. Following are the criteria used as a reference for selecting sources for in-depth interviews:

- The resource person has an advanced educational background (at least S2) related to communication, journalism, business administration, or a related family and is relevant to the topic raised or has qualified, proven, and relevant work experience to be able to provide opinions that are not only valuable but also accountable (senior position and above).
- Have the capacity and knowledge related to COVID-19 and its vaccines, journalism, public relations, and or digital communication.

For Focus Group Discussion (FGD) invited speakers or discussion participants do not have to have expertise in communication or public relations. However, discussion participants so far must be directly involved in efforts to support the government's efforts to disseminate information, conduct socialization, or even directly participate in efforts to resolve the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia.

In qualitative research, data analysis is carried out from the time data collection begins until it is complete and completed (Sugiyono, 2009). There are several stages in data analysis for qualitative research as stated by Creswell (2014), namely writing data and writing the findings. There are at least six stages in data analysis, namely: collecting and preparing for data analysis, reading the results of data collection carefully, coding, using coding to make descriptions and data analysis, updating the writing of data descriptions and narrative of results, and interpreting findings (Creswell, 2014).

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This study was carried out in January 2021 starting from the development of the research framework, determining and executing research methods, to writing the results. All activities were carried out without face-to-face between the writer and the author and the resource person due to the pandemic and its respective protocols.

Result and Discussion

Losing Positivity
In an era of many popular news channels and virtual social frameworks aiming for better connectivity, no doubt most of the time spent indoors is invested in online media (Oktaviansyah & Rahman, 2020). At a time when the world is experiencing an unprecedented crisis due to the COVID-19 outbreak, people around the world are forced to stay indoors for safety. As a result,

there is less positive coverage around the world that is published in various forms of media. Unreliable and false information is spreading around the world in such a way that some commentators are now referring to the new avalanche of misinformation accompanying the COVID-19 pandemic as 'disinfodemic' (UN News, 2020). Guy Berger, director of policy and strategy on communication and information at UNESCO stated that, "In times of high fear, uncertainty and ignorance, there is fertile ground for fabrication to flourish and grow. The big risk is that any falsehood that gets traction can negate the importance of the true body of facts" (UN News, 2020).

Information Dissemination

The idea of agenda setting and gatekeeper, as well as how they influence modern media coverage was discussed by one FDG participants. Agenda setting is the idea that the media sets the agenda by choosing the topics it covers. Gatekeeper refers to the idea that too many events occur that the media must cover them all, so they have to choose which ones to cover specifically. Because there is a specificity that is preceded often, factors such as clickbait or yellow newspaper are used for the needs of an online company to attract traffic and visitors. So far, the government has conveyed quite a lot of information on the COVID-19 vaccine on social media, but it is considered not to be conveyed through one door. One institution provides information that is not the same as other institutions, which confuses the public.

There are four sources of news obtained, namely from the government, vaccine buyers, observers and the media. Because news sources from the government can be seen as not one door, it is difficult for the public to truly ensure the accuracy of information. The intensity of providing information is lacking, if it is not well informed then fake news will appear. On the other hand, the public does not take news from the official government website. The public prefers to take information submitted through social media and often the information conveyed is from an untrustworthy source that ultimately gives a wrong perception of the Covid-19 Vaccine problem. Among them, the problem is that there are vaccines that have an effect on our bodies, or there are vaccines that come from weakened cells, even the problem of halal is a matter of public debate.

To socialize on social media, it is very effective, but if it is not focused on tools, but sources. Expected to be filtered again and then distributed through all channels. Social media can be effective when collaborating with mass media. This is due to the code of ethics upheld by the mass media and its role as a gatekeeper to help align information. The results of in-depth interviews and FGDs assess that the socialization that has been carried out so far is quite good, but the effect will be even better if it can be carried out simultaneously and widely with the participation of all parties. Starting from the media, government and private agencies, billboards and other social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, to activities in the smallest neighbourhoods such as neighbourhood association (RT/ RW) or district. Continuous socialization and is hereditary to form a network system.

One operator is diligent in spreading short messages, for example, one short message a day but continuously for several months. This is expected to have a positive effect. Apart from that, the government can also produce short and disseminated video content. As well as the need for a counter-narrative from the Ministry of Informatics or anticipation from the government by tracking digital traces of spreading hoaxes and being given legal sanctions. Education related

to vaccination is the same as behaviour change education so that it can use the history that has occurred in Indonesia such as immunization.

Proposed Solutions

It is undeniable that fake news related to the COVID-19 vaccine has been widely spread in all circles of society in Indonesia through various information channels including social media. The spread of fake news related to COVID-19 must be handled immediately and addressed so that the execution of mass vaccines in Indonesia can be smoother by minimizing rejection from the public. Several efforts need to be done to prevent the spread of fake news related to the COVID-19 vaccine through social media and its bad effects, including:

- Collaboration with various stakeholders
  Dissemination of information that can be accurate and can be accounted for is not only the responsibility of the government. In fact, the government must collaborate with various companies and media in Indonesia to be able to voice correct information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Cooperation with the media must also be improved in order to increase public optimism in vaccination efforts and the resolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. Apart from office holders in Indonesia, the government can also collaborate with global organizations such as the World Health Organization.
- Mass and periodic socialization and education on various social media channels
  With the execution of the COVID-19 vaccine which will be gradual in a few months, then mass socialization and education must be carried out periodically to ensure that sustainable information can be received by the public at various levels.
- Strict penalties for spreading fake news
  With a lot of hoaxes spread on various social media channels, the government needs to respond quickly with strict supervision of the spread of fake content and be able to apply strict penalties for social media owners who spread fake news (hoax) related to COVID-19 and public anxiety, one of which is by blocking or taking down the account as a first step.
- Provide a social media platform or channel to file complaints
  Led by the Ministry of Informatics and the Ministry of Health, the government can provide a complaint platform for people who find false content related to the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Creating creative educational and counter-narrative content Creative content needs to be made to attract people's attention while maximizing the penetration of correct and reliable news, such as: one-minute short video (P4N2), literacy for the community, and infographic.

Conclusion

This research concludes that there has been a lot of communication and socialization carried out by the government regarding the COVID-19 vaccine but it has not been structured in one source and there is still minimal anticipation of fake news. As a result, a lot of fake news has spread widely in the community regarding COVID-19 starting from issues related to health and beyond health or safety. Efforts that can be made to minimize the spread of fake news and its dangers include collaboration with various stakeholders, mass and periodic socialization and education on various social media channels, strict penalties for spreading fake news, providing social media platforms or channels to file complaints, create educational content and creative counter-narrative.

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