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LEGAL REVIEW OF HOAXES ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE POST-TRUTH ERA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research analyses the phenomenon of spreading hoaxes on social media in the context of the post-truth era, where false information spreads more easily and influences public opinion compared to objective facts. Focusing on a legal perspective, this study analyses the regulations and rules that apply in Indonesia regarding the spread of fake news (hoaxes) and their legal impact on the perpetrators. This research is limited to a normative legal approach without empirical data on the effectiveness of law enforcement.

Research Design & Methods: This research uses a normative juridical approach through literature study, with doctrinal analysis of regulations on hoaxes on social media and the views of legal experts regarding their application in the post-truth era.

Findings: The results show that although legal tools are in place, implementation challenges and low digital literacy are still hindering, so multi-stakeholder collaboration and increased digital literacy education are needed as long-term solutions to reduce the spread of hoaxes in the post-truth era. In addition, legal analysis is limited by the challenges of condemning and limiting data, especially in dealing with cross-border misinformation.

Implications & Recommendations: Law enforcement against hoaxes requires cross-sector collaboration, increased digital literacy, regulatory updates, and synergy between law enforcement and digital platforms for fast and effective handling.

Contribution & Value Added: This research makes an important contribution by examining the role of law in addressing hoaxes in the post-truth era and suggests multi-stakeholder collaboration and regulatory updates for more effective handling of hoaxes on social media.

Keywords: Hoax, Post-truth, Law.

JEL codes: D83, K00, K42

Article type: research paper

INTRODUCTION

The convergence of communication technologies has expanded the scope of communication media, with increasingly diverse forms and responsiveness. Cyberspace has changed the way we interact in all aspects of life from politics, culture, to economics, creating a digital substitute for every activity in the real world (Singleton, 2022). Information technology has liberated the barriers of time, place, and distance, and ushered us into a more advanced digital era. Not only does it make it easier to communicate, but it also opens up wide access to various sources of knowledge and opportunities for global collaboration. Thanks to this technology, we can access information in real-time, communicate with anyone in different parts of the world, and work flexibly without being bound by physical location. Digital platforms allow all forms of transactions, learning, and even work, to be done online, so many aspects of life that were once limited by time and space can now be done anytime and anywhere.

The implementation of convergence of communication technologies not only brings convenience in information consumption but also contributes to the development of the quality of human resources, especially in operating digital media. This encourages the development of media that are more responsive and adaptive to the needs of society, making information more accessible, and increasing individual involvement in a dynamic digital environment (Mukti, 2023). With the existence of increasingly varied digital platforms, such as social media, blogs, and applications based on Artificial Intelligence (AI), individuals are not only consumers of information, but also content producers who interact with a global audience.

In addition to its benefits, media convergence also brings challenges, such as the potential for more massive dissemination of false information or hoaxes that can trigger public distrust of valid information. This challenge is made more complex by the emergence of technologies such as deepfakes that use artificial intelligence to create manipulative content, which can blur the line between fact and fiction online (Vizoso et al., 2021). This situation is exacerbated by social media algorithms that often prioritise viral content, without considering the validity of the information, allowing manipulative content to spread rapidly. Various digital and media platforms are currently developing automated detection methods, but a full countermeasure against deepfakes requires a combination of more sophisticated detection technologies and better digital literacy in society so that the public can understand how to recognise and critically assess information.

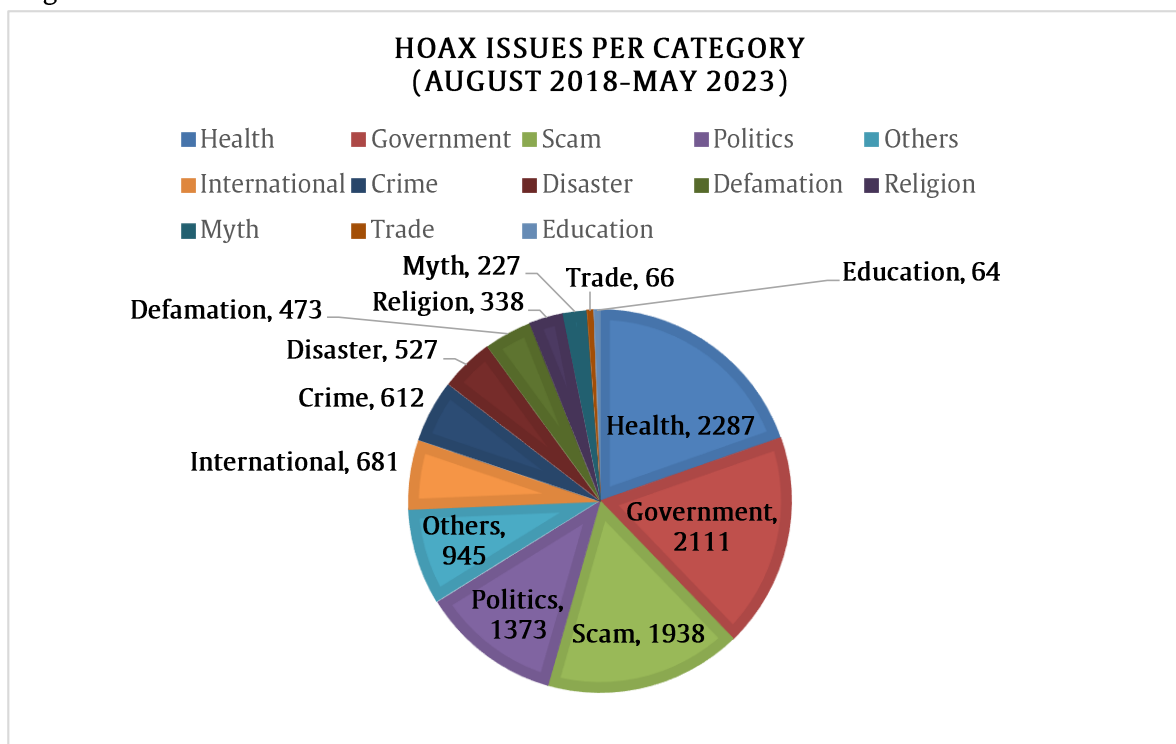
Social media has become a highly influential platform for information dissemination, but it is also vulnerable to abuse. The speed, reach and sheer volume of digital content are global challenges in combating fake news (Chen et al., 2018). Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube have become the main platforms for spreading false and misleading information (Fauzy & Setiawan, 2023). This is due to the ease of access and speed of information dissemination on social media, which allows hoaxes to spread faster, deeper and wider than ever before (Mohd Yatid, 2019).

In the post-truth era, the dissemination of hoaxes and misinformation on social media has become a serious problem that has significant legal implications. In this case, personal beliefs take precedence over objective facts, challenging the traditional role of teachers as mediators of knowledge (Barriento & Ribeiro, 2024). This phenomenon not only impacts the integrity of information, but also challenges the existing legal system to adapt to this new reality. This is because, in a post-truth environment, objective truth is often replaced by emotions and personal beliefs that are massively disseminated, so that false information can be considered true if it continues to be repeated and supported by certain groups (Nurhaqi, 2023). The spread of fake news on social media has a serious impact on social cohesion and citizens' trust (Chen et al., 2018). This is exacerbated by people's tendency to accept information based on their feelings and beliefs, rather than objective facts (Iddianto & Azi, 2022). Many people tend to believe and spread news without verification, especially on platforms that are often used by the public such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and TikTok, which are often the main means of spreading hoaxes.

Research on the emergence of hoaxes points to several key factors in the spread and acceptance of false information in society. One study highlighted that hoaxes on social media are often constructed with sensational titles and use provocative visuals to attract public attention. In their dissemination, hoaxes utilise word choices that create an impression of credibility even though the source is often untrustworthy (Ibrahim & Rahman, 2020). Another study of university students showed that while many had a negative attitude towards hoaxes, some still shared this false information for entertainment or to avoid perceived risks, indicating the need for higher awareness of the negative impact of hoaxes among young people (Saputra, 2020).

In democratic countries like Indonesia, misinformation is often used for electoral gain (Effendi, 2023), suggesting the need for stricter legal review of the spread of hoaxes on social media. This suggests the need for stricter legal review of the spread of hoaxes on social media, as without clear regulation and effective law enforcement, the digital space can become an arena for the spread of disinformation that undermines the integrity of democracy. In Indonesia, the spread of hoaxes is also linked to legal liability, where the government can impose criminal sanctions for hoaxes involving slander, threats or harmful content, as a measure to reduce the negative impact of hoaxes on social media (Imaroh et al., 2023).

According to the latest data from the Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kominfo), there were a total of 11,642 hoax contents identified by the AIS Team of the Directorate General of Informatics Applications of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, starting from the period August 2018 to May 2023. The following are the findings of hoax issues based on their categories:



From a total of 11,642 hoax contents that have been identified, verified, and validated by the Ministry of Communication and Information's AIS Team, the most hoax categories are found in the health sector with 2,287 items, 2,111 hoax contents related to government, 1,938 contents in the fraud category, and 1,373 hoax contents in the political sector.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a massive wave of hoaxes covering health issues, vaccines, and government policies, which caused public panic and hampered the government's efforts in handling the pandemic (Rubyasih et al., 2023). In addition, hoaxes related to politics, religion and social issues are often used to divide communities and influence public opinion, especially during key moments such as elections. The lack of legal awareness and people's low ability to check facts from trusted sources are also the main reasons why hoaxes are easily spread in Indonesia. Efforts from the government to overcome hoaxes with digital literacy education and law enforcement against perpetrators of hoax distribution are important steps in facing this challenge (Putri et al., 2020).

From a legal perspective, various regulations have been implemented to tackle the spread of hoaxes, such as in Indonesia's Electronic Information and Transaction (IET) Law, which enables law enforcement against individuals who deliberately spread false information that harms others. However, law enforcement in hoax cases still faces challenges, especially in ensuring justice and legal equality without discrimination (Imaroh et al., 2023). Laws need to be adaptive in dealing with the rapid development of hoaxes in the digital space, including by working with digital platforms to block hoax content (Sari, 2021). In this context, the role of digital platforms is not only limited to filtering and blocking, but also to providing education for users on digital literacy and information verification. In addition, collaboration in the application of automated detection algorithms and the use of artificial intelligence can help identify and reduce the spread of fake content in real-time. With a multidisciplinary approach that includes digital literacy education, detection technology, and legal regulation, these efforts demonstrate a commitment to reducing the negative impact of hoaxes in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Post-Truth Era

The Post-Truth Era is an era where objective facts have less influence in shaping public opinion than emotions and personal beliefs. The term is often associated with reduced trust in verified truth, which is replaced by narratives driven by subjectivity or emotional bias. In this context, distrust of science and truth-bearing institutions is on the rise, as conspiracy theories and misinformation spread. For example, in politics, this phenomenon is seen when verified facts are ignored or reduced in favour of emotional narratives or alternative 'truths' that are more appealing or convenient to audiences (Yanar, 2020).

According to Ahlstrom-Vij (2023), the post-truth era is characterised by a decline in the influence of objective information in people's political decisions, where public preferences no longer align with objectively true information. Arencibia & Velázquez (2021) see this era as a manipulative phenomenon, influenced by parties with ideological and economic interests. They argue that this period is shaped by global oligarchic forces that manipulate the truth to control society. Meanwhile, Lorusso (2020) mentions that this era marks a shift from the search for universal truth towards social legitimacy, where truth becomes more flexible depending on the social context and is recognised based on social recognition rather than objective facts.

Oxford Dictionaries, the leading online dictionary developed by Oxford University, has named 'post-truth' as its 'Word of the Year'. According to Oxford Dictionaries, 'post-truth' refers to a term or condition in which personal beliefs and feelings are more influential in shaping public opinion than objective facts. Oxford Dictionaries also stated that the selection of 'post-truth' as the 'Word of the Year' was influenced by the way people today obtain information, where many choose social media as the main source of news. In the post-truth era, digital platforms facilitate the rapid spread of disinformation, blurring the line between fact and opinion. This leads to disinformation, exacerbates bias and manipulation of information, and challenges the public in assessing the accuracy of news (Aminudin, 2022).

This post-truth condition leads to an epistemological crisis where truth is often ignored and the public tends to believe information that suits their preferences, regardless of its factual validity. In addition, this term is used to describe a situation when an understanding of facts is no longer the basis of public opinion. Instead, psychological manipulation through emotions becomes a tool to spread information, both through social media and digital news (Aminudin, 2022; Hannon, 2023). In the post-truth era, subjective claims and personal beliefs often receive more attention than objective facts in shaping public opinion (Ahlstrom-Vij, 2023; Chair & Adzfar, 2021; Prihantoro & Mustafid, 2023). This phenomenon reflects the weakening influence of factual information on people's preferences and decision-making processes (Ahlstrom-Vij, 2023). The post-truth era also erodes the distinction between truth and lies, and between honesty and dishonesty, by prioritising individual opinions over verifiable facts.

Interestingly, the post-truth era brings both challenges and opportunities. While it can lead to the spread of misinformation and the rejection of science (Ege, 2023), the post-truth era also provides an opportunity to review truth claims made by various parties, including religious groups (Chair & Adzfar, 2021). Some scholars argue that this era can open up new insights in research and educational policy, and encourage critical examination of long-accepted truths (Wolgemuth et al., 2018). The main impact of the post-truth era is seen in the proliferation of fake news and hoaxes spread through social media. The literature on this aspect highlights how information that entertains and fulfils emotional preferences can influence public perceptions of truth, especially in political contexts (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2019). This in turn can magnify the impact of disinformation in everyday life.

A Study of the Etymology and Historical Context of Post-Truth

The concept of 'post-truth' etymologically and historically evolved from a neologism that reflects social changes in the way truth is understood. The term was first coined by Steve Tesich in 1992 in his article in *The Nation* to describe how society tends to ignore the truth in favour of comforting information. Tesich argued that major events, such as the Watergate and Iran-Contra

scandals, showed that society preferred the comfort of widely accepted lies to facing hard reality (Kozinets et al., 2020; Shatin, 2020).

The term 'post-truth', when etymological, comes from the English language. In the Oxford Dictionary, the word 'post' means after, while 'truth' refers to the quality or state of being true (Yanar, 2020). 'Truth' itself is the noun form of the adjective 'true.' Therefore, post-truth can be defined as 'after the truth' or 'post-truth.' The term post-truth era is used because in this period, the use of ratios that underlie truth and the observation of facts as a basis for measuring objectivity no longer seem to be important in influencing public opinion, thought or behaviour. During this period, the public is more influenced by sensationalism and emotional mobilisation than by information based on verifiable truth or facts. In this era, people tend to accept information that conforms to their beliefs, thus enabling the proliferation of fake news and disinformation. Post-truth is also fuelled by the relativism of truth that developed since the era of postmodernism, which allows subjective interpretations of objective facts (Fernandes, 2022).

The historical development of 'post-truth' is also closely related to the crisis of trust in scientific authority and conventional institutions that peaked in recent decades. Social media, with its ability to amplify individual biases, became a key tool facilitating the dissemination of emotional and subjective information. As such, it can exacerbate crises in modern social and political contexts (Jones, 2023; Mieliekiestsev, 2023), as well as create major challenges for several fields, such as education, public policy and democracy, as important decisions are often made based on perceptions or emotions rather than verifiable reality.

The post-truth phenomenon is also historically considered a response to the 'crisis of evidence' that emerged in the 20th century, where the difficulty in dealing with the complexity of facts in a global context led to public fatigue and scepticism towards objective truth. This transformation shows how information in the post-truth era is no longer interpreted as universal facts, but as narratives shaped for specific purposes, often in a political or ideological context (Bratina, 2021; Ermolin, 2021). Based on a historical perspective, the post-truth phenomenon is the culmination of a social development in which information technology, especially social media, facilitated a shift from fact-based communication to emotion-based communication. This era also reflects a crisis of trust in scientific authority and conventional media, which is exacerbated by communication strategies that emphasise the manipulation of emotions to shape public opinion (Jones, 2023; Nazeer, 2021).

Concepts and Characteristics of Post-Truth Society

The concept of 'Post-Truth Society' describes a society where objective truth is often pushed aside, and emotions and personal beliefs dominate. The term 'post-truth' was popularised in 2016 by Oxford Dictionaries, and is now closely associated with phenomena such as fake news, disinformation, and the manipulation of public opinion through social media. Key characteristics of a post-truth society include a decline in the authority of scientific facts, the rise of subjectivity and relativism in the determination of truth, and a growing distrust of traditional media and formal institutions (Fernandes, 2022; Malcolm, 2021).

Some scholars have suggested that post-truth is more than an epistemic problem; it is also an affective condition that reflects public concerns about the difficulty of determining trustworthy facts in a complex information environment. This view challenges the overly simplistic understanding of post-truth as simply a problem of false information, and points to the importance of a more complex approach to understanding and addressing this phenomenon (Harsin, 2024). This perspective challenges the simplistic notion of post-truth as simply a problem of false information, suggesting the need for a more nuanced approach to understanding and addressing the phenomenon.

Key characteristics of a post-truth society include the prevalence of fake news, the manipulation of information by powerful interests, and the erosion of trust in traditional institutions and expertise (Brousselle, 2024; Lewandowsky et al., 2017). Social media platforms play an important role in amplifying misinformation and creating echo chambers that reinforce existing beliefs (Graham & FitzGerald, 2024). The post-truth era is also characterised by political polarisation, declining social capital and a fragmented media landscape (Lewandowsky et al.,

2017). The characteristics of a post-truth society show changes in the way facts and truth are perceived, with the following characteristics:

a. The Dominance of Emotions over Facts

In a post-truth society, emotions and personal beliefs often take precedence over objective facts. Public opinion tends to be shaped by narratives that elicit emotional responses, blurring the line between truth and manipulation. Research shows that in a political context, negative sentiments can accelerate the formation of extreme opinions that are driven by emotions rather than facts. In this phenomenon, emotions are often considered more accurate than facts, which makes the manipulation of information through social media more acceptable (Das, 2023; Gorenc, 2020).

b. The Emergence of Distrust in Authorities and Experts

In a post-truth society, truth becomes relative and is no longer considered an absolute concept. As a result, scientific authority and facts are often questioned, and people become sceptical of experts and scientific institutions. This poses a serious challenge to democracy as trust in formal institutions weakens (Enroth, 2023; Valladares, 2022).

c. Influence of Social Media and Digital Technology

Social media is the main platform that plays a major role in spreading fake news and disinformation in the post-truth era, especially because emotional content goes viral faster. Digital media allows unverified information to spread widely, resulting in disinformation that impacts social and political behaviour, and creates conditions where opinions are prioritised over facts (Fernandes, 2022; Stocchetti, 2022).

d. The Influence of Postmodernism and the Fading Value of Scientific Truth

The culture of postmodernism, which emphasises relativism and the rejection of a single narrative, has contributed to the formation of a post-truth society. This narrative casts doubt on scientific truth and objective facts, shifting the focus to personal or group interpretations (Arias-Maldonado, 2020; Malcolm, 2021).

The main characteristics of the post-truth society reflect a shift from objectivity to subjectivity, where information that is entertaining or conforms to personal beliefs is favoured over verified truth. Jose Antonio Zarzalegos, a journalist and former Director of ABC and El Correo in Spain, asserts that post-truth is not the same as lies, but rather post-truth describes a situation where objective facts have less influence than emotions and personal beliefs. This phenomenon is also exacerbated by the increasing use of social media algorithms that reinforce the 'echo chamber,' where individuals only receive information that matches their own beliefs, which exacerbates social polarisation (Portelli & Oladi, 2021). Thus, the concept of a post-truth society shows a cultural and political transformation that is strongly influenced by technology and the development of the global political economy.

METHODS

This research uses a normative approach method by utilising materials from literature studies. Library research steps include: primary legal materials, secondary legal materials, and tertiary legal materials, which complement secondary data from library sources. Data collection techniques are carried out through library sources to systematically analyse law books and other related materials. The data obtained from various legal materials is then analysed qualitatively to understand the principles and rules that apply in the context of the issues discussed. This analysis aims to obtain a comprehensive picture of the legal issues being studied, including the underlying theoretical and practical aspects. The results of the analysis are expected to be able to provide critical views and suggestions relevant to the renewal of policies or legal regulations in accordance with current legal needs.

RESULT

The Impact of Hoaxes on Social Security

The impact of hoaxes on social security is significant, especially in the post-truth era where information can spread quickly through social media. The spread of fake news or hoaxes can trigger panic, hatred, insecurity, and even division among the community. The spread of hoaxes through social media can quickly influence people's perceptions and views on an issue (Zakirah, 2020; Safitri & Dyatmika, 2021). This has the potential to cause misunderstanding and social conflict. Teenagers tend to be easily influenced and spread hoaxes without first verifying the truth. According to research, hoaxes designed to manipulate public opinion often have a negative impact on social cohesion, causing unrest and reinforcing polarisation in society.

Research by Sulistyawan & Pinilih (2019) highlighted that hoaxes have the potential to trigger hatred and divide society. Hoaxes that contain sensitive issues, such as religion, ethnicity, or politics, have greater potential to cause social divisions. For example, hoaxes targeting certain religious groups can trigger strong reactions from those who feel attacked. Therefore, it is important for the government and society to make preventive efforts, such as increasing digital literacy and critical information education, to reduce the negative impact of hoaxes and strengthen social solidarity in society. Study of Nurhaqi (2023) shows that the spread of hoaxes, which are often designed to manipulate public opinion, can create an atmosphere of insecurity and vulnerability in society. Hoaxes can cause arguments and break friendships, especially those with SARA content that are prone to causing friction between communities (Dewatana & Adillah, 2021).

Another impact of hoaxes on social security is the increased risk of criminalisation and legal liability. According to Imaroh et al., (2023), hoaxes that contain criminal elements such as defamation, threats of violence, or incitement may be subject to punishment under applicable laws. Provisions in the ITE Law, for example, allow courts to prosecute perpetrators of hoaxes who deliberately spread hatred or threats to certain groups. This impact is important for maintaining public order, but on the other hand it also increases social tensions as some parties may feel criminalised on the basis of the content they spread on social media.

The study identified that there are three types of audiences in receiving hoax information: pragmatic-recreative, ideological, and critical-sceptical. This polarisation arises because different audience types have different responses to hoax information; some people accept hoaxes according to their beliefs, while others are more sceptical. This polarisation contributes to increased social tensions, especially in the political context, where hoax information can be used to shape public opinion and discredit political opponents. These tensions threaten social cohesion, as groups become more closed to different views and more likely to believe information that suits their preferences.

Overview of Legal Regulation

The dissemination of false information and fake news on social media platforms has a major impact on society, especially in the context of politics and religion. As Agustina et al., (2023) explain, political fake news can 'trigger interfaith conflicts including intolerance and radicalism, disrupt religious life, and increase polarisation and distrust of political institutions, as well as distrust of the media.' This highlights the need for legal measures to address the spread of misinformation.

The law has an important role in tackling the spread of hoaxes to protect the harmed public. As social media is not as tightly regulated as traditional mass media, the spread of hoaxes can happen very easily, causing many parties to become indirect victims. The role of the law in tackling hoaxes includes strict action against the perpetrators of hoaxes and protection for victims harmed by this false information. Stronger legal efforts are expected to provide a deterrent effect and protect the public from the social losses caused by hoaxes.

Law enforcement against social media hoaxes in the post-truth era is a complex endeavour as the information circulating is often based on emotions and opinions, rather than objective facts. This phenomenon is exacerbated by social media algorithms that automatically prioritise attention-grabbing content, making it easier for hoaxes to spread. In many countries,

including Indonesia, regulations such as the Electronic Information and Transaction Law have been implemented to address the spread of false information and provide a legal basis for sanctions against hoax spreaders. However, key challenges in implementation include technological limitations to monitor the massive volume of information and difficulties in assessing the intent and impact of the spread of fake news.

The handling of hoaxes on social media in the post-truth era in Indonesia is based on various legal bases that aim to control the spread of misleading information and maintain public order. Table 1 shows some of the law enforcement regulations that form the basis for handling the spread of hoaxes in Indonesia.

Table 1. Law Enforcement Regulation

Legal Foundation	Description	Primary Objective
Law Number 11 Year 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions (EIT Law)	The ITE Law regulates the dissemination of electronic information, including sanctions for individuals who disseminate false or misleading information that can harm others or trigger social instability.	Prevent and control the spread of fake news on the internet.
Amendment of ITE Law through Law Number 19 Year 2016	This revision strengthens the rules related to the spread of hoax news on social media, including the affirmation of Article 28 paragraph (2) which prohibits the dissemination of information that incites hatred or hostility based on SARA (ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup).	Crack down on hoaxes that trigger social conflict and discrimination.
Criminal Code (KUHP), Articles 156 and 157	Regulates sanctions against the spread of hate speech or news that has the potential to disturb public order, including in the realm of social media.	Prevent provocation and maintain public order.
National Police Chief Regulation No. 6/2019 on the Investigation of Criminal Offences	Regulate the procedures and authority of investigators in handling cybercrime cases, including hoaxes.	Clarify law enforcement measures against cybercrime.
Law No. 40/2008 on the Elimination of Racial and Ethnic Discrimination	Provides sanctions for discriminatory acts based on race and ethnicity, including the spread of hoaxes that incite racial hatred through social media.	Prevent and crack down on potentially racially divisive hoaxes.
Government Regulation No. 71/2019 on the Implementation of Electronic Systems and Transactions	Regulates the implementation and management of safe and controlled electronic information, and requires digital platform providers to cooperate in dealing with unlawful content.	Encourage digital platforms to monitor content and prevent hoaxes.

[Coluccia \(2020\)](#) argues that ‘ignoring alone is not enough to stop the spread, even if most people do. More active preventive measures are needed; in particular, the proposed model formally describes how post retractions and disclaimers, cultural/educational initiatives, and content moderation policies (including filtering) by internet companies, can influence the likelihood of persistence of hoaxes and fake news in general.’ This suggests that a multi-faceted approach, combining legal, educational, and technological strategies, may be necessary to effectively address the problem of hoaxes in the post-truth era.

The Role of Social Media Platforms as Hoax Eradicators

Law enforcement against the spread of hoaxes in the post-truth era requires a collaborative approach, one of which is with social media platforms. Social media has become the main channel for information dissemination, but it is also vulnerable to abuse and the spread of fake news. The unlimited freedom on these platforms makes them vulnerable to abuse and misinformation ([Bali & Desai, 2019](#); [Nasery et al., 2023](#)).

Social media platforms also play a role in the fight against hoaxes. Several initiatives have been undertaken, such as Jabar Saber Hoaks on Instagram that verifies fake news and reduces its

spread (Febrianti et al., 2024). Platforms also rely on community reporting as the main mechanism to identify information that needs to be blocked or labelled as misleading (Wu, 2024). In addition, blockchain-based approaches are being developed to create news platforms that are resistant to manipulation and traceable.

Platforms are also developing partnership programmes with fact-verification agencies, such as Facebook's partnership with the Third-Party Fact-Checking Network, to independently assess the validity of content. This helps in labelling fake news and reducing the visibility of content that proves to be misleading, thereby preventing its wider dissemination (Astuti & Mustofa, 2020). Another approach is the launch of educational features such as warning notifications that pop up when users are about to share potentially hoaxed information. This feature gives users time to rethink and verify the content. Research by Nurrahmi & Syam (2020) shows that these notifications can reduce the number of hoaxes as they encourage users to be more careful.

DISCUSSION

Overcoming hoaxes in the post-truth era requires complementary legal approaches and non-legal strategies. Collaboration between law enforcement and community empowerment is needed, which is expected to effectively suppress the spread of hoaxes, increase public trust in valid information, and strengthen social integrity amidst the rapid and uncontrollable flow of information in the digital era.

The Legal Approach

The strict implementation of a progressive legal approach aims to ensure that all perpetrators of hoaxes receive equal treatment without discrimination, according to the principle of 'equality before the law'. This approach emphasises the importance of adaptive legal responses, covering not only the text of the law but also its context, thus prioritising legal certainty, justice, and benefits for society (Nurhaqi, 2023). Law enforcement against hoaxes on social media in Indonesia is based on the Law on Electronic Information and Transactions (EIT Law), which stipulates sanctions for the spread of fake news and content that has the potential to trigger social conflict. This regulation helps the government provide a legal basis for action against the spread of information that is untrue and has a negative impact on the public (Lazuardi, 2020).

Restorative Justice is proposed as an alternative approach in cases of hoax spreading, especially for minor offenders or those who do not intend to create major negative impacts. Through this approach, perpetrators and victims can mediate to restore social relations, so that legal sanctions can be applied more humanely (Lazuardi, 2020).

Non-Legal Approach

The non-legal approach to tackling hoaxes in the post-truth era focuses on strengthening digital literacy, public education, and the active role of communities to increase public resilience to false information. Here are some of the main strategies:

a. Improving Digital Literacy

Digital literacy education is important to equip people with the ability to think critically about the information they encounter on social media. Digital literacy is considered an important preventive effort to improve the critical thinking skills of the community, especially the younger generation, in recognising hoaxes. The Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model has been proven effective in improving students' critical thinking skills, which makes them better able to identify fake news on social media (Aini, 2021). Digital literacy does not only include the technical ability to use digital devices, but also includes critical thinking skills that are essential for evaluating the authenticity and credibility of information spread widely on social media and other online platforms.

Digital literacy skills are essential for citizens to distinguish true information from false, help people recognise the characteristics of hoaxes, avoid the pitfalls of fake news that is often emotionally or sensationally presented, and develop skills in distinguishing between facts and opinions (Ünal et al., 2022). In addition, these skills enable users to identify manipulation techniques often used in fake news, such as biased selection of information or the use of

provocative images and titles to provoke a quick reaction without further verification. With increased access to social media platforms and information technology, digital literacy provides citizens with the tools to seek clarification and confirmation from trusted sources, thereby reducing the risk of widespread fake news.

Improving digital literacy and critical thinking skills is essential to help people assess the credibility of information. Research shows the importance of instilling critical thinking skills in combating hoaxes or misinformation, especially given the low level of digital literacy in Indonesian society (Nurfazri et al., 2024). This approach could be integrated into educational institutions or more formal policies. The implementation of widespread digital literacy skills can also build collective awareness of personal and social responsibility in information dissemination. Individuals trained in digital literacy tend to be more cautious before sharing content, as they understand the negative impacts that can arise from the spread of hoaxes, such as social confusion, public distrust and political tension. Thus, digital literacy serves as a foundation for creating a society that is more critical, insightful and resilient to the negative influence of digital information in the modern era.

b. Public Education

The strategy of 'prebunking' or information inoculation aims to strengthen public resilience against hoaxes. This approach provides people with an understanding of the ways in which misinformation can deceive, before they are exposed to it (Lewandowsky & van der Linden, 2021). Public education through media campaigns, seminars, and collaboration with educational institutions and community organisations helps raise awareness about the dangers of hoaxes. It also provides an understanding of how to recognise the signs of false information and the steps that can be taken to verify information.

Public education campaigns through seminars, workshops and workshops on various platforms to raise awareness on the importance of information verification. The government and local communities work together, especially in vulnerable times such as the run-up to elections, to reduce the impact of hoaxes on socio-political stability. This approach involves various parties, including the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, which focuses on disseminating validated information to the wider community (Iskandar et al., 2023). It also includes training in the use of fact-checking apps that allow people, especially students, to test the veracity of information before sharing it. The use of these apps in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes has shown positive results in increasing students' digital literacy awareness in Indonesia, encouraging them to independently verify information (Ikhsan et al., 2021).

c. Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

Multi-stakeholder collaboration is a key strategy in tackling hoaxes in the post-truth era. Cross-sector cooperation involving the government, technology companies, media, non-governmental organisations and local communities strengthens the ability to detect and reduce the impact of hoaxes. The government is working with technology platforms to moderate content and prevent the widespread spread of misinformation on social media.

The government is working with platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to monitor content that violates the rules, while the public is encouraged to actively participate in digital literacy. In addition, from a public communication perspective, accurate information delivery strategies from the media and the government are also an important element. The implementation of warning-based approaches on social media, such as special signs or labels on potentially hoax news, helps users to be more sceptical and cautious in trusting widespread information. This approach has been shown to be effective in reducing public trust in hoaxes, especially when accompanied by an explanation of why the information is marked as invalid (Kirchner & Reuter, 2020).

Government efforts have also been significant, including the launch of a digital literacy programme that covers four main pillars: digital safety, digital ethics, digital culture and digital skills. The Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kominfo) runs this programme to strengthen people's ability to recognise and avoid hoaxes, and collaborates with others to filter false information before it spreads further (Ikhsano et al., 2023). In Indonesia, the government

through the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) and non-governmental organisations such as Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia (MAFINDO) run various initiatives, including seminars, online campaigns and workshops to improve people's digital literacy. This approach is reinforced by training in educational settings such as schools and Islamic boarding schools, which build critical thinking patterns early on in the younger generation. These collaborative efforts show that communities, together with the government and social organisations, can strengthen a culture of verification and improve information resilience in their communities amid the massive flow of misinformation.

CONCLUSION

The convergence of communication technologies has expanded the scope of communication media, creating a digital alternative to every real-world activity. However, it has also led to the spread of fake news and misinformation, especially on social media platforms. Fake news can trigger panic, hatred, insecurity and even division in society. Fake news often targets sensitive issues such as religion, ethnicity or politics, potentially causing social disharmony. It also increases the risk of criminalisation and legal liability under laws such as Indonesia's Electronic Information and Transaction Law (EIT Law). Efforts to combat fake news in the post-truth era require a collaborative approach involving both law enforcement and non-legal strategies. Legal approaches include strict application of progressive laws to ensure equal treatment for all spreaders of fake news, based on the principle of 'equality before the law'. The non-legal approach focuses on strengthening digital literacy, public education, and the active role of the community to increase community resilience against false information.

Digital literacy education is essential to equip people with critical thinking skills to evaluate information on social media. Public education campaigns aim to raise awareness about the dangers of fake news and how to recognise the signs of false information. Key strategies include strict law enforcement, restorative justice for minor offenders, digital literacy education, public awareness campaigns, and multi-stakeholder collaboration involving government, technology companies, media, NGOs, and local communities to strengthen the ability to detect and reduce the impact of fake news. The government works with platforms to moderate content and prevent the spread of misinformation, while communities are encouraged to actively participate in digital literacy efforts.

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