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**OPINIONS ON CONTENT THAT ARE EXTREMELY CONTROVERSIAL ON THE INDONESIAN TWITTER**

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**Abstract:**

The influence of media technology extends beyond their importance to human existence to the point where they are being utilized to disseminate revolutionary propaganda in the form of hate speech. According to McLuhan's idea, for communication phenomena to occur through the use of media, it must do more than consider the medium in which the message will be delivered. In analyzing the context of the message on a specific platform, this investigation on Twitter in Indonesia demonstrates how Twitter has become a facilitator of extremism and an accelerant of radicalization. In contrast to the common belief that radicalism has a single meaning, this study aims to explain why the media and messages can only substantially alter the mode of communication if they are backed by ideological components and features of the technology itself in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Radical Contents, Radicalism, Social Media, Digital Communication.

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**INTRODUCTION**

According to Antony (2008), "social media" is a subset of new media in which consumers may actively create, distribute, and evaluate material. Although Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) describe social media as a set of online applications based on the concept and technology of Web 2.0 that let users create and share content, others use the term to refer to a more general phenomenon involving the usage of the internet.

It is now beyond dispute that political and ideological movements can and do expand on a local, national, and even international scale using social media platforms linked by digital networks. Social media is being used as a platform for right-wing ideology on a local level, as seen by the rise of Pegida and its online presence (Schwemmer, 2021). Twitter's usage of social media is a good illustration of this phenomenon. These days, many people turn to social media platforms like Twitter to keep up with the news (Kim & Sin, 2015; Mitchell et al., 2013). The paper focuses on the message's context inside social media, specifically how it relates to extremism.

The ease with which extremist views, ideas, and propaganda may be shared through social media is alarming. Transnational ideology, which flourishes and spreads through platforms like Twitter and Facebook, is an integral part of the growth of religious extremism. Instigating a conceptual discussion regarding interactions in digital communication medium is the proliferation of messages associated with radicalism on social media. Some have hypothesized that the rise of extremist material on social media is due to the negative effects of online interaction, including dysfunctional behavior, a lack of community, less privacy, a weaker democracy, and more social

isolation (Kavanaugh et al., 2000; Putnam, 2000). "Face-to-face radicalization has been substituted by internet radicalization," as stated by Sageman (Valentini et al., 2020).

Using McLuhan as a lens (McLuhan, 1994), this paper wants to show how technology affects people's thoughts and actions in society via my study of radical content on Twitter, especially in 2019–2021. In other words, this paper wants to explain how people's tastes in information associated with radicalism are influenced by technology and how they express those tastes on the social media network Twitter. In addition, this article demonstrates how Twitter's impact on the plural meaning of radicalism varies depending on the user, the user's ideological choices, and Twitter itself.

**Discourse.** Foucault's definition of discourse (O'farrell, 2005) emphasizes the relationship between authority and information. Disclosing the nature of one's power is crucial when analyzing conversation. According to Foucault (as cited in (Mills, 2004)), power is an element that contributes to the construction of discourse since it is diffused (disseminated) via social connections and permits the emergence of diverse patterns of human behavior within a society. Statements on the same issue may be collected together and made to make sense, giving rise to a discourse in its own right (Foucault in (Parker, 1990)).

Discourse is composed of many parts. According to Hajer (1993 in (Eriyanto, 2020)), discourse consists of a collection of ideas, conceptions, concepts, and categories that are formed via certain behaviors and then applied to the world to give it meaning. The following topics are brought into sharper light by this definition: Discourse is an "assemblage of ideas, thoughts, or concepts"; discourse is created, reproduced, and modified by social actors; discourse is constructed by actors who have a stake in how others interpret reality; and discourse is bounded and restricted to specific social contexts (Eriyanto, 2020).

**Discourse and Political Power.** There is a connection between the political dynamics of a location or nation and the messages that are created by actors from certain social backgrounds in the process of discourse production (Panjaitan, 2020). In accordance with all of this, the political process is seen as a contestation of discourse by discourse coalition theory (Hajer, 1995 in (Eriyanto, 2020)). Discourse is developed as a venue for expressing the interests or conveying the stance of players in relation to a specific subject based on the interests of political actors. The constructed discourse is also broadcast to the general public in an effort to sway as many of the intended audiences as feasible. Discourse competition also occurs when multiple actors try to persuade the public that the discourse they convey deserves support and when those actors compete to establish a dominant discourse on a given issue, with the goal of having that discourse ultimately govern the decision-making process and, ultimately, the formation of policy. Statements in the news media, on social media, and in television appearances are all examples of competitive discourse that contribute to the formation of the dominant discourse (Hajer, 1995 (Eriyanto, 2020)).

Those in positions of authority also have challenges maintaining their dominance in radical speech. Whoever can establish themselves as the dominant party in the radical discourse space does so in large part because of how that discourse has developed and what the public has been most likely to absorb. Therefore, organizations with different agendas or interests in the radical discourse will attempt to fill that space with conceptions, understandings, knowledge, and ideas consistent with their objectives, with the hope that these things would be accepted as facts or universal truths by the public take in information and join the conversation (Haramain et al., 2020).

**Radicalism in Indonesia.** There is a constant discussion in Indonesia about extremism and radical movements. Terrorism and radicalism go hand in hand, and radicalism is frequently seen as the driving force behind terrorist acts. In this setting, Islamic political populist movements are often linked to extremism and terrorism because of the widespread belief that they arise in

response to government repression and political exploitation (Panjaitan, 2020). The structuralist method examines radicalism in Indonesia as a way of thinking and a social movement driven by economic disparity, political repression, and social class issues. Islamic extremism in Indonesia may be traced back to its inception and rapid growth in response to political persecution at the hands of the governing government and contemporary colonialism at the hands of the United States (Jati, 2013). Using Islamic doctrine as both a foundation and a weapon, radicalism has come to be seen as a movement opposed to the Indonesian state.

That this is the case is bolstered by the Indonesian government's portrayal of radicalism as a threat that all available measures, including legislative action, must eliminate. The Indonesian government is trying to stamp out radicalism by, among other things, not recognizing or disbanding any radical organizations (Panjaitan, 2020). Undoubtedly, this is a driving force behind the increasingly divisive rhetoric surrounding public extremism in Indonesia. Furthermore, radicalism is understood to be a dynamic discourse in its propagation, prompting the government to take several measures to counteract it in public institutions like schools and universities (Panjaitan, 2020).

Moreover, the topic of the terrorist movement is merely one part of the radicalization discourse in Indonesia. Many factors contribute to the growth of this discourse, including issues within the country's political and economic system (which includes democracy, capitalism, and imperialism) (Panjaitan, 2020). There has also been significant growth in a radical speech in the context of ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup (refers to SARA) problems, particularly in online communities like social media (Idris & Adji, 2019).

**Twitter as a Discourse Platform.** Twitter is a worldwide social media platform for forming information networks, including revolutionary messaging networks, and exchanging messages and news (Idris & Adji, 2019). Features on Twitter that allow users to communicate with other users without mediation, as well as the prospect of information becoming viral, make this social media network a cutting-edge political communication tool often utilized by organizations with political goals (Van Kessel & Castelein, 2016).

Terrorists' use of Twitter, which has evolved into a propaganda weapon in the indoctrination and recruiting process, has made it the platform with which they are most associated (Djaballah et al., 2019). The platform is one of the most popular places for radical organizations to establish accounts and disseminate radical ideology since it permits more than 500 million messages to be submitted every day (Djaballah et al., 2019). The Twitter messaging network, a vital part of the radical discourse space, may also be utilized to sway public opinion in the direction of a group's priorities. Based on the description above, the authors chose the study's title, "Opinions on Content that are Extremely Controversial on the Indonesian Twitter".

## METHODS

Netnography and content analysis were used for data collection and interpretation in this study. Netnography is a qualitative and interpretative research approach (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017) that examines internet-related human behaviors and culture qualitatively (Sahasrad et al., 2020). Netnography is the application of ethnographic research methodologies to the virtual domain. In this work, netnography was selected as a technique that can record computer-mediated social interactions between humans. The netnographic method used in this study is a content analysis of the gathered tweets. This method allows academics to investigate the dynamics of virtual communities in more detail (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017). Netnography may assist scholars in determining the context of the radicalism-related Twitter debate. Researchers use the content analysis approach when examining tweets based on gathered observations. According to Patton

(2002 as cited in (Diddi, 2015)), content analysis refers to all attempts undertaken to identify the consistency and essential meaning of a collection of qualitative data. Content analysis may be applied to a variety of data types, such as textual data, visual data, and audio data (Stemler, 2015).

**Data Collection.** This study collects data from Twitter observations by collecting tweets mentioning extremism. I used the term 'radicalism' for this purpose. The selection of the term 'radicalism' is believed to be able to answer research questions since it is possible to see the sorts of dialogues or debates that occur when individuals discuss radicalism using these keywords. Twitter's Top Tweets function is used to search for tweets containing the phrase "radicalism." The Top Tweets feature is suitable for this study because the algorithm is based on several factors, including the tweet's freshness, its relevance to the keywords used and the frequency with which users interact with tweets that use similar keywords, tweet engagement, which includes retweets, clicks, favorites, and impressions, as well as rich media or media types included in a tweet (such as images, videos, GIFs, and polls). Considered adequate justifications for using this characteristic in data collecting. Observation of the monthly Top Tweets page for a set time and collection of a sample of tweets as research data. The sampling of tweets was based on the number of responses, likes, and retweets, which, according to the researcher, showed the virality of the Top Tweets. After collecting all tweets considered pertinent to this study, the analysis content was utilized to code, analyze, and classify the obtained data.

**Limitations in Data Collection.** It is indisputable that the data acquired is an overview or reflection of the setting and evolution of the discourse of radicalism, given that this study is qualitative research and the data is taken using the sampling technique of the top tweets feature. The author of this study, however, believes that the information gathered here adequately depicts the actual discourse of radicals. To back up the content analysis approach and provide data that can be used to explain the description of the evolution of discourse from 2019 to 2021, the researchers conducted an exhaustive literature reading procedure. The algorithm of the top tweets features also restricts the amount of data that can be collected utilizing the function. A tweet's freshness, relevance to keywords, user interaction, engagement, impressions, and rich media (if any) are all taken into account by the algorithm that determines which tweets should be shown as featured (such as images, videos, GIFs, and polls). Consequently, the Twitter algorithm may be missing specific viral messages.

**The Object of Research.** This study's subject is a selection of tweets gathered from a specified time frame using Twitter's Advanced Search function. As was said before, the researcher analyzed the Twitter account from which the sample tweets were first published to code them. What follows is a breakdown, by kind, of the information obtained from the various accounts.

1) News Outlet ("News outlet accounts include Twitter accounts Detik.com, Tirto.id, Tempo, CNN Indonesia, Vice Indonesia, DW Indonesia, Gelora News, Republika"); 2) Academist and Activists accounts include Twitter account; 3) Political Institutions and Politicians and politician accounts include Twitter accounts; 4) Influencers; 5) Communities and Organizations; 6) Talking points ("Sample tweets from Top Tweets page on Twitter and Sample Accounts Category")

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Management Radical contents in Twitter Indonesia, 2019-2021.** It has also occurred in Indonesia that social media plays a significant role in the dissemination of ideological propaganda (Muthohirin, 2015). These extremist groups are using social media to spread their ideology and shape the world's Muslim communities; they are focusing especially on young people since they make up the platform's majority. The rise of Islamic militancy is being facilitated and accelerated by online platforms (Muthohirin, 2015).

Similarly to Muthohirin (2015), Romario (2019) study discovered that the rise of social media platforms like Instagram was significant in the propagation of extremism. As Romario (2019) notes, Twitter is one of the most popular social media platforms among young people, making it an ideal platform for disseminating hoaxes. This has resulted in the Indonesian government promoting counter-radicalism using the same social media platforms. Facal (2020) and Woodward et al. (2014) demonstrate how radicals might use social media to distribute false information. Utilizing demonization techniques words Woodward et al. (2014) used to describe how radicals smear their opponents by staging newsworthy actions while simultaneously using the media as a conduit for spreading false information.

Current findings, based on content analysis of representative samples of trending tweets containing the keyword "radicalism," indicate that the formed discourse on radicalism can be understood as a space wherein people exercise the authority they possess, in this case the authority to upload tweets containing content containing related agendas. Radicalism aims to establish and maintain hegemony over the field of speech. Each participant in this radical discourse strives to achieve public legitimacy as a better party or a party that should be supported by establishing their ideas, understandings, or alliances with other participants or institutions. In the period between 2019 and 2021, various actors will strive for dominance in the discourse of radicalism in order to define and legitimize their ideas or understandings as accepted facts by the public. This will allow for the formation of common facts, the dissemination of which will strengthen the position and power of the actors or interest groups.

In 2019, The broadest range of subjects was discussed; A lot of people are talking about the next presidential election in 2019; discussions about radical organizations are the norm. Few people talk about Pancasila and NKRI, but many people talk about the dangers of universities being targeted by radicals and the propagation of ideology on college campuses. The radicalization of Islam is often mentioned in concerns about intolerance and terrorism. For the first time, the administration is receiving criticism for handling the extremism problem.

The momentum of the 2019 presidential election warrants more examination within the framework of the current discussion on extremism in Indonesia. Support for or criticism of candidate no. 01 and candidate no. 02, or more particularly Jokowi and Prabowo, dominates the radicalism conversation on Twitter in the run-up to and immediately after the 2019 Presidential Election period. Many interested players instantly abandon this area for radical debate once the political impetus has been obsolete, which is why it has been mostly dormant since mid-2020 when the intensity of radicalism discourse related to the 2019 Presidential Election began to decline.

In this setting, the discourse on extremism around the upcoming 2019 presidential election centers on discussions about Islamic educational institutions, tenets, and applications or practices. There is a widespread belief that a political actor or institution's standing may be inferred or even decided by how it relates to Islam's tenets. Assured Islam. Furthermore, radicalism discourse is an essential factor in determining the success of political actors or institutions in convincing the public regarding their efforts to involve the practices of Islamic religious beliefs in the scope of policy formation or political decisions that impact or involve the public.

In 2020, Discourses on so-called "radical" organizations. Two, it was around this time that Islamophobia entered the public discourse. A common theme in discussions of Islamophobia is skepticism among the general public about the dangers of radicalism, which is seen as an artificial problem that is pushed into the spotlight to single out Muslims. Three, debates persist over whether or not to adopt Pancasila and NKRI. Fourth, concerns about communist ideology and the PKI, considered dangerous to national security, began to be discussed. Some citizens are beginning to voice their displeasure with the government's response to the radicalization problem. Six, during

this time, there are fewer references to debates over presidential elections and partisanship (no. 01 vs. 02). Seven, talks about schools are still in progress.

Midway through the year 2020, Islamophobic rhetoric evolved, demonstrating widespread mistrust over the problem of radicalism, which is seen as inorganic and is focused squarely on Muslims. After the conversation about the next presidential election started to wane, this dialogue developed and quickly gained momentum. Since Islam is being used as a political weapon in the 2019 presidential election, this is an intriguing topic to investigate further. The public's growing unease over the prominence of the subject of Islamic extremism in the 2019 presidential election is said to be at the root of this doubt.

In 2021, very little has been said about radical groups. There is an ongoing conversation about Islamophobia that extends beyond the topic of extremist organizations. Third, there are no longer overt discussions of presidential elections or polarization (no. 01 vs. 02). What does "radicalism" mean in 2019 and 2020 on Twitter in Indonesia? This trend exemplifies the skeptical stance of those who have begun to question the veracity of the problem of Islamic radicalism.

**Radicalism among Twitter Users.** Based on my findings, I conclude that Twitter in Indonesia is a hotbed of identity-driven extremism. Now, when others are sometimes automatically tagged as radical on social media, this label is more potent than ever. Suppose one were to criticize the government, for instance, they may be branded as a radical or referred to "kadrun", depending on the nature of the criticism and the causes being advocated for. Suddenly, you will be considered a radical if you disagree with the topic.

The first, radicalism is a religious practice of extremist groups that readily consider others as heretical, unbelievers, and deserving of death. This view is rooted in Islam. The second school of thought holds that radical ideas stand in opposition to popular beliefs. In the Indonesian context, where the prevailing ideology is known as Pancasila, two ideologies are frequently associated with radicalism because of their perceived opposition to the philosophy at its core: 1) radical Islamic groups, which are defined as groups that want to change Pancasila with Islamic Sharia, and 2) communist groups, which are interpreted as groups that want to change Pancasila. Pancasila and Communist Thought. These two ideas have been around in some form or another in Indonesia since at least the colonial period, and they are making regular appearances in the conversation on Twitter even now. According to the third school of thought, radicalism is only a political instrument whose use is contingent on the individual or group using it.

When it comes to a struggle for votes in a general election, the labels of radical organizations and Pancasila groups are employed in Indonesia. However, this interpretation of the term radicalism is restricted to the country's political environment. Definitionally hazy, radicalism has been on the rise between 2014 and 2019 because, in practice, radicalism is inextricably linked to religion, even though the problems at hand are not always theologically motivated. The term "radical" may also describe accusations made against Islamic organizations. The discourse on radicalism in Indonesia sometimes stigmatizes people for seemingly minor differences, such as differing ideas or lifestyle choices.

**Radicalism's relation to Politics.** Another issue with extremism on Twitter in Indonesia is related to the country's system of government. This is shown in the respondent's comprehension of the struggles between nationalists and radicals, radical Muslims, and kadrun. It is always someone on one side blaming someone else for something and then using it as a reason to dislike or attack the other group. People who identify as "cebong" are stigmatized for being "pro-government", much as people who identify as "kampret" are mercilessly targeted as "radicals" or "Kadrun".

People on Twitter seem to believe that persons in authoritative roles are more worthy of the label "radical" than those who are not in authoritative roles. Labels given to people who oppose or criticize the government are another way Twitter users make sense of the radicalism issue. Elections for regional governors and the president are held on a nationwide scale in Indonesia, making the country's democratic system a breeding ground for identity politics and leading to a significant societal divide. Users on Twitter believe politicians utilize radicalism to sway people and guarantee themselves a good election outcome.

**Radicalism Relation to Islam.** Common popular themes address the connection between radical speech and radical groups. Some groups use its popularity for political contestation rather than direct financial gain. In most cases, they will attack any problem to boost the chances of the candidate they favor, who will ultimately provide them with more financial gain. Some have isolated themselves, whether with fellow Muslims or elsewhere, since respondents see them as harboring the seeds of radicalism and the idea of altering the structure of the state. Democracies' early supporters are immediately labeled as not part of Islam's religious majority. Users of the social media platform Twitter see the influence of identity politics performed by politicians in pairs to get votes, as shown in the radical groups tied to the label of radicalism on Twitter.

Increasingly, Islamic organizations and nationalist movements are forced to negotiate using identity politics. Groups stigmatized as "radical Islamist" are often utilized as political pawns or as fodder with which to attack the bases of Islamic-based candidate pairings. The communist and anti-religious labels are often used against nationalist organizations. As a result, the topic of radical Islam will likely continue to surface and circulate online whenever a general election is near.

## CONCLUSION

In response to this study question, it has been determined that Twitter plays a role in shaping the discourse of radicalism in Indonesia into a biased, limitless discourse that continues to circulate in the lead-up to the next general election. The language of radicalism is often divisive and polarizing. The proliferation of buzzers and bots that spread misinformation and incite hatred is a defining characteristic of our post-truth society.

Findings from this study demonstrate that the medium and the message are not restricted to the kinds of interactions that occur organically in the development of human communication styles when applied to the setting of social media. In the realm of social media, this paper contends that a medium and message may only substantially alter the style of communication when backed by the ideological qualities and features of the technology itself. McLuhan's "the medium is the message" is better articulated as "the medium is the message when ideology and technology are interwoven into it" when applied to social media. This means that Twitter, with its algorithmic features, bots, and buzzers, has become a medium and message for radical discourse.

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