

ANALYZING THE PHENOMENON OF POPULISM IN THE ERA OF SOCIALMEDIA IN THE POLITICAL CONTEXT: SYSTEMATIC REVIEW STUDY

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Abstract, Social media platforms have facilitated the process of political communication. Social networking has become one of the preferred communicative tools for political populist groups because social media is considered effective for spreading their popular narratives. It illustrates that the idea of technology supports certain populist strategies. In today's digital media era, the ability to access information quickly and widely has increased political participation, spread views on populism and made it easier to spread populist ideas through Twitter, Facebook, Tiktok, and YouTube. The purpose of writing this article is to provide an overview of several studies that have been conducted to analyze the phenomenon of populism and will provide a broader perspective on the phenomenon of political populism in the Social Media Era. This article uses the Systematic Review method which consists of searching for articles through SAGE Journal, Google Scholar, and Taylor & Francis Online, determining inclusion criteria and compiling the focus of the studies reviewed. The results of this study in describing the role of digital media in influencing the development and spread of political populism in Indonesia that social media is used as a tool to build personal branding and build social narratives that seem to defend the community this is done in order to gain public sympathy. Characteristics and strategies used by populist leaders in utilizing social media to strengthen their political support base. The conclusion of this research is that social media has been used by populist leaders as a tool to influence the development and spread of political populism in Indonesia. Social media has been utilized to build personal branding and construct social narratives that seek to defend society, which allows populists to strengthen their political support base.

Keywords: Social Media in Political Context; Systematic Review; Populism Phenomenon

1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon in politics has often been a subject of discussion both among academics and in discussions at coffee shops among the general public. One of these phenomena is Populism. The phenomenon of populism has become a major topic in various political fields for several decades. Populism has become more dominant in shaping the political process in recent decades, especially in the context of democratic countries. Political populism is a term used to describe political actions that target public interests and offer easy solutions to complex problems. On the other hand, populism can also lead to the decline of democracy.

At the same time, social media platforms have facilitated the political communication process, with social networking becoming one of the preferred communicative tools for political populist groups to disseminate their messages and visions. This provides an indication that the ideas conveyed through social media strongly support certain populist strategies (Baldwin, 2019). In 2017, which became one of the cases of the phenomenon of populism, during the gubernatorial election in Jakarta, populist groups mobilized gatherings of Muslims at the National Monument (Monas), which was intensively done, especially before the Jakarta gubernatorial election in 2017, to respond to the statements made by the incumbent governor, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok), which were deemed to insult verses of

the Quran. The recording of his speech then went viral on social media and was deemed to contain elements of blasphemy (Kusumo, 2018). From this case, it can be seen that populist groups use populist strategies to overthrow political opponents, and it is from this case that it can be inferred that populism can also have negative impacts on the development of democracy.

Populism has become an increasingly central topic in the context of political developments both globally and nationally. Moreover, in the rapidly developing digital technology era, the existence of populism can significantly affect the stability of democracy and political order. Therefore, research that focuses on analyzing the phenomenon of populism in the digital media era in the political context becomes very important to be conducted.

The use of the term 'populism' in Indonesian political studies reflects how the concept of populism itself is widely used and debated by academics (Gidron, et al, Noam, 2013). Populism emphasizes how to mobilize the masses through social movements and build a communitarian model of democracy (Mudde, et al, Kaltswasser, 2017). The Practical Political Style approach views populism as a way for politicians and parties to mobilize mass support. One approach to understanding populism is the ideational approach, which portrays populism as a political conception that emphasizes conflict between the masses (Mouffe, 2018).

Generally, populism is viewed as an ideology, and populism is seen as a weapon or political strategy aimed at mobilizing the masses to gain support by eliminating the distance between populist figures (charismatic leaders) and society (Kenny, 2017). Pelfini (2006) argues that populism can be an effective strategy for uniting a divided society by emphasizing unity among the people and the elites. However, populism can also bring significant risks, including increasing tension and hostility between the elite and the people. Therefore, it is important to ensure that populism is understood correctly and used as a strategy to build an inclusive and just society, rather than to divide it (Pelfini, 2006). The contestation and political maneuvers based on identity can lead to dissatisfaction, fragmentation, and conflict within society (Wijanarko, 2021). Therefore, populism can serve as a shortcut for political actors to gain power, as it allows them to create identities that are easily understood and influenced by the public. Populism can also be used as a tool to create anti-elite sentiments and take advantage of public anxieties and anger that are exploited through misleading propaganda and narratives. The high political cost makes populist movements a cheap option to win votes. The conceptual understanding of populism is still unclear due to the movement and development of the times (Bonikowski, 2016).

Currently, social media can facilitate populist movements by allowing politicians to spread their messages widely to the public. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube enable politicians to disseminate information and ideas more quickly and extensively than through direct campaigning. This makes it easier for populist groups to use popular narratives to attract public attention. Media campaigns or social media campaigns build personal branding and spread narratives and ideas that are used because they reduce costs and are very effective and efficient. Therefore, populist groups use social media as a tool for populism.

Furthermore, social media also enables populist movements to more easily identify and directly access public sentiment, enabling them to craft popular narratives that attract public interest. By utilizing the data stored by social media

platforms, politicians can find and target their messages to those most likely to be supportive. This makes it easier for populist politicians to influence public opinion and behavior.

In the era of social media, the ability to access information quickly and widely has increased political participation, disseminated views on populism, and facilitated the spread of populist ideas. The need for relevant and fast information has made social media more popular and a primary channel for political information for the public. With social media, populists can easily influence public opinion and create strong influence.

Populism has become a global phenomenon that can have negative impacts on democratic systems. In the age of social media, populism can accelerate the spread of inaccurate information or even hoaxes that have the potential to undermine public trust in government and democratic institutions. In addition, populist leaders often use rhetorical strategies that can divide society, such as campaigning against elitism and attacking specific groups (Norris, 2019).

The urgency of research on the phenomenon of populism in the era of social media is crucial. A systematic study can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and strategies of populism used in utilizing social media. Therefore, it is necessary to examine how the decline of democracy is caused by populist strategies using social media as a tool, and the development of political populism in the social media era to strengthen their political support base.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The writing of this article was conducted using the systematic review method based on relevant international and national journals obtained from SAGE Journal, Google Scholar, and Taylor & Francis Online. The systematic review method is a research method used to collect, analyze, and evaluate existing and known data related to a particular topic. According to (Creswell, 2013) That analyzing the content of existing articles is a technique used to analyze the content of written texts, image artifacts or recordings. In this article, the researchers will focus on the study of the content of written texts from international and national journal articles using systematic review, which consists of the process of searching for articles, determining inclusion criteria, and formulating the focus of the study to be examined.

The researcher conducted a search for articles by exploring previous studies conducted by researchers using the keywords "populism and digital media" contained in sources such as SAGE Journal, Google Scholar, and Taylor & Francis Online. The search was conducted to find 15 relevant journal articles on the topic of populism and digital media from the Google Scholar, Taylor, and Francis Online databases. After the articles were collected, the criteria testing and execution phase was carried out to select the obtained articles.

The criteria for selecting articles to be used as references in this article are as follows the 15 articles obtained must meet the following criteria:

1. The topic of the reviewed articles focuses on the phenomenon of political populism as a strategy used by political parties or individuals to build popularity as

a way to attract the attention of the masses. This is intended to enable further examination of the topic of political populism that is currently developing.

2. The topic presented should be related to the development of the Social Media Era which is the object of this study. This aims to explain that populist groups use social media to carry out political populist strategies to increase the popularity of individuals or political parties. If the findings of the resulting articles meet the abovetwo criteria, the researcher will use them as references for reading, analysis, and synthesis to find the core construction of the study in writing this article on the phenomenon of political populism in the Social Media Era in the Political Context.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Decline of Democracy and Populist Strategies Using Social Media

The quality of democracy in a country can significantly decline due to various factors, one of which is populism used as a political strategy by populist groups. The phenomenon of declining democracy can have negative impacts on society, such as the loss of trust in leaders, conflicts among people, and a decrease in the quality of life.

Populist strategies have been proven to be effective in taking advantage of anti-government sentiments perceived as unfair, by playing on people's emotions to gain public support and achieve political goals. Some common populist strategies include fiery rhetoric, emphasizing issues that are easily understood by the public, and offering simple solutions to complex problems. However, some populist movements can also cause conflicts within society. Therefore, negative impacts of populism can lead to the decline of democracy, especially in the current era of technology, particularly social media, which is being used as a tool by populists to convey their narratives

By using social media, politicians can quickly and easily reach out to the public and build a strong support base through direct interaction. However, the use of social media also carries risks, such as the spread of fake information (hoax) or the formation of groups that only agree with one side. In today's era of social media, the phenomenon of political populism is increasingly occurring. Populism makes use of social media as a tool to facilitate political strategies to build personal or party popularity.

Upon further examination, populism is not merely a political tool to gain power and draw attention from the public, but rather populist leaders often neglect the interests of the people and take advantage of certain issues after gaining power. Populism is described as a term of battle to denounce political opponents (Mudde, 2017). The phenomenon of populism in Indonesia poses a threat to democracy itself (Hara, 2017).

Contemporary politics has brought media as a propaganda tool that can be misused. The rapid access to digital information, which is not limited by space and time, has multidimensional impacts. The euphoria of information technology advancement has become a sensational phenomenon in the global arena (Mekelberg, 2016). Media as a digital information access has become the main current for the dissemination of various information that is unrestricted by anything (Mujibuddin, 2018). The presence of social media has become an important tool for populists to campaign their platform. In the context of political populism, social

media can be used to exploit issues considered popular among the masses, as well as to strengthen the political narrative being promoted. In this regard, social media can help politicians build a strong support base and generate significant political momentum. Additionally, the adoption of populist political strategies that use social media as the main tool can also cause polarization and eliminate the nuances of complex political issues. Consequently, the public can become less informed and tend to adopt simplistic and absolute views.

Populism develops in three dimensions, namely as an ideology, populism as political communication, and populism as a political style (Woods, 2014). Populist groups tend to use simple rhetoric and simplify complex issues faced by society, with solutions that are often extreme and potentially threatening to democratic principles. Policies promoted by populist politicians often do not rely on accurate data or facts, but are based on opinions or misperceptions. Populists tend to view the world in binary terms and simplify social complexity, such as by dividing society into "us" and "them". This often leads to polarization and social tension.

In the era of social media, populist groups often use social media and other online platforms to promote their ideologies and views, often in dishonest and manipulative ways. This can strengthen social polarization and blur the line between facts and opinions, as well as reinforce people's belief in false narratives. The above description can lead to a decline in democracy caused by the phenomenon of populism in the era of social media.

The Development of Political Populism in the Era of Social Media

The widespread presence of social media has changed many aspects of human life, including politics. One significant impact of social media on politics is the rise of political populism. Political populism can be defined as a political approach that promotes simple and emotional narratives aimed at winning popular support.

According to Vin Crosbie, social media, which serves as a means of sharing information from one person to many people, is referred to as "mass media." Meanwhile, what is called interpersonal media (one to one) and new media can be used to pass on ideas and information from many people to many people (Jinan, 2013). Social media provides a wide space for politicians and political groups to spread populist messages. By utilizing social media, politicians can easily create and reinforce narratives about simple policies that promise to meet the needs of the people. These narratives are often not based on empirical data or accurate facts, but rather on the emotions and hopes of the people.

Indonesia, as one of the world's largest internet users, also has the potential to become a target of the post-truth phenomenon both in economic and political interests. One recent phenomenon was the case of the DKI Jakarta gubernatorial election in 2017 related to the viral video of Ahok's speech that was manipulated and circulated on social media. The post-truth phenomenon in Indonesia has spread due to four reasons. First, the asymmetrical advancement of information technology compared to the government's and society's capacity to adapt. Second, the unending political competition since the 2014 presidential election. Third, the support from certain segments of society for extreme anti-Pancasila ideologies. Fourth, the anxiety regarding the current government's changes and reforms to the system (Sulistyo, 2017).

In the post-truth era, the boundaries between honesty and dishonesty, truth and falsehood, reality and the virtual world, fiction and non-fiction become increasingly blurred. The media, as a digital information access, has become the main channel for the dissemination of various unrestricted information (Mujibuddin, 2018). Karl Marx (Ritzer, 2012), In the realm of politics, objective facts are positioned as a single narrative of truth that is deemed irrelevant. This is in line with the widespread development of social media, which has an impact on the ease of shaping public opinion through news hoaxes that are far from objective facts. The production of truth becomes a paradox in the public sphere. This situation is a practice that leads to post-truth, where anomalies of reality are conditioned as something true by those who have interests. Public opinion is then manipulated to shape the consciousness of society as they desire.

Information Technology has dismantled space, time, place, and distance leading to the digital era (Suharyanto, 2019). Kemajuan Teknologi informasi yang begitu masif meluas ke semua bidang, The massive advancement of information technology has extended its reach to all fields, and it also has negative effects. The information flood in the digital revolution era brings several social impacts. The problem of society is not about how to get the news but the lack of ability to digest accurate information. The credibility of mainstream media is always undermined by the interests of the elites and owners, forcing the public to seek alternative information (Syuhada, 2018).

The development of populism today indicates a change in the political landscape influenced by social media. In the era of social media, political populism has become easier to spread, as it enables populist leaders to reach a wider audience and gather support quickly and easily. On the one hand, social media can expand the space of democracy and increase political participation of the public. However, on the other hand, social media can also reinforce political polarization and facilitate the spread of fake news and produce filter bubbles where people only receive information that aligns with their political views. Therefore, a critical analysis of this title should consider two things: first, whether there is a causal relationship between social media and political populism, and second, whether the development of political populism in the era of social media is beneficial or detrimental to democracy.

To answer the first question, research has shown a positive correlation between social media use and support for populist politics. However, the causal relationship is still debated, as political populism can also arise without social media. Therefore, it is important to recognize that social media is only a factor influencing the development of political populism, not the sole cause.

To address the second question, some studies suggest that political populism can harm democracy by strengthening the separation between social groups and promoting anti-elitism that may neglect the importance of cooperation among political leaders. On the other hand, some argue that political populism can help improve democracy by giving voice to previously unheard voices.

CONCLUSION

Populism is a political movement that emphasizes the interests of ordinary people and opposes the political elite. The era of social media provides a larger space for populism to flourish, as it allows populist messages and ideas to spread

quickly and widely through platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, and Instagram. This analysis aims to understand how the phenomenon of populism in the era of social media affects political dynamics. Social media has been used by populist leaders as a tool to influence the development and spread of political populism in Indonesia. Social media has been leveraged to build personal branding and construct social narratives that seek to defend the people, enabling populists to strengthen their political support base.

Social media has become an important tool for populist leaders to promote their messages, build support, and mobilize the masses. Populists often use social media to speak directly to their followers. They also take advantage of social platform algorithms to maintain consistency with their public views and strengthen their narratives. However, the influence of social media in driving populism is not always positive. Due to social media algorithms that are biased and polarization that occurs within the social media platform, social media users are often exposed to information that only confirms their own views and encourages them to strengthen their beliefs. This has the potential to reinforce division and weaken consensus within society.

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