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The Development of Fake News in the Post-Truth Age*

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Abstract

This study aims to provide a complete picture of the development of fake news during this post-truth era. Authors use a qualitative approach with a literature study method. Today's society uses social media for various needs and has considerable advantages. However, social media is also a mouthpiece for spreading fake news. Fake news today is a threat to society. In the post-truth era, people only believe in the truth of news based on belief, not objective facts. Society becomes polarized because of a relative definition of truth. This phenomenon is also supported by an algorithm that causes people to echo their own making. It is this echo that makes objective facts blurry and causes truth bias. Plus, with the development of technology, it is possible to make videos that resemble the original or deep fakes. Deep fakes become dangerous because people are becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish whether a video is real or fake. Many applications are able to create deep fakes video. This study concludes that fake news in this era is becoming increasingly dangerous. However, the public also plays a role in accelerating the development of fake news. Literacy skills, such as digital literacy, are very important to prevent the harmful effects of fake news.

Keywords: Fake News; Digital Literacy; Deepfake; Post-Truth

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan gambaran yang utuh tentang perkembangan berita palsu di era post-truth ini. Penulis menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi literatur. Masyarakat saat ini menggunakan media sosial untuk berbagai kebutuhan dan memiliki keuntungan yang cukup besar. Namun, media sosial juga menjadi corong penyebaran berita bohong. Berita palsu hari ini adalah ancaman bagi masyarakat. Di era post-truth, orang hanya percaya pada kebenaran berita berdasarkan keyakinan, bukan fakta objektif. Masyarakat menjadi terpolarisasi karena definisi kebenaran yang relatif. Fenomena ini juga didukung oleh algoritma yang menyebabkan orang menggemakan buatan mereka sendiri. Gema inilah yang membuat fakta objektif menjadi kabur dan menyebabkan bias kebenaran. Ditambah lagi dengan perkembangan teknologi yang memungkinkan untuk membuat video yang menyerupai aslinya atau deep fakes. Kepalsuan yang dalam menjadi berbahaya karena orang semakin sulit membedakan apakah video itu asli atau palsu. Banyak aplikasi yang mampu membuat video palsu yang dalam. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa berita palsu di era ini semakin berbahaya. Namun, masyarakat juga berperan dalam mempercepat berkembangnya berita bohong. Keterampilan literasi, seperti literasi digital, sangat penting untuk mencegah efek berbahaya dari berita palsu.

Kata Kunci: Berita Palsu; Literasi Digital; Palsu; Pasca-Kebenaran

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A. INTRODUCTION

Fake news is indeed an old phenomenon. However, in the digital era, its existence has become very important and disturbing. The development of technology, the Internet, and social media accelerates fake news to a higher level. Technology is developing in an exponential graph due to innovations happening almost every day. The turning of the Internet into public consumption is the catalyst for many changes in the world. At first, the Internet was used as an intelligence medium that became a tool in the Cold war. However, over time, the public can enjoy this technology. The result is a connected world across the globe without any geographic barriers. The existence of the Internet has become the starting point for the digitization of society. All began to penetrate the digital world. The Internet is an important driving force for change in our society. Using Thomas Friedman's term, the world has become "flat": everything is connected into one big network. The factors above are the catalysts that encourage the emergence of various technological innovations that are enjoyed to date.

In 1998, a search engine called Google was created. This machine is one of the drivers for the ease of finding information. Google is revolutionizing and redefining the way people search for information. The creation of Google is just one of many waves of innovation. In addition to Google, several applications were created shortly. In 2004, Harvard dropout Mark Zuckerberg created an app where people could connect online. This application later became known as Facebook. It was created for use on a local scale, only for Harvard students. However, in the end, Facebook became public consumption and made people connect. Currently, it is estimated that the number of Facebook users reaches 2 billion people. After Facebook, one by one application has sprung up that affect people's lives. One year later, the public is again presented with a new application called YouTube. This application is for uploading videos so that they can be watched online. YouTube can also be used as a means of interaction and also a source of information. Then, after YouTube, just a year later, Twitter appeared. Three years later, WhatsApp was created in 2009, and one year later, the Instagram application was launched.

If we look closely, the internet provides a huge space for innovation. From a communication point of view, this application can make it easier to connect and exchange ideas with others. The internet has become a new medium for exchanging information and interacting. Such media are classified as Web 2.0 media because their emergence occurs thanks to the internet. Blank & Reisdorf defines web 2.0 as the use of the internet to provide a platform on which the network effect can emerge.³ Web platforms such as Wikipedia, MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Google, Blogger, Rapidshare, WordPress, Hi5, Flickr, Photobucket, Orkut, Skyrock, Twitter, YouPorn, Pornhub, Youku, Orkut, Redtube, Friendster, Adultfriendfinder, Megavideo, Tagged, Tube8, Mediafire, Megaupload, Mixi, Livejournal, LinkedIn, Netlog, ThePirateBay, Orkut, XVideos, Metacafe, Digg, StudiVZ, et cetera. are said to be typical for this

³ Blank, Grant, and Bianca C Reisdorf. 2012. "The Participatory Web." *Information, Communication & Society*, Vol. 15, No. 4 537-554, p. 539.

transformation of the internet.⁴ Web 2.0 media has become the main tool for people to get information and communicate. Its users are also growing bigger every year.

The advantages of Web 2.0 are illustrated in the explanation of Witterman & Zikmund-Fischer (2012).

"The implications of the three defining characteristics of Web 2.0: (1) user participation, (2) openness and (3) network effects are that: (1) anyone who has the desire, time, and technological access can contribute to various online resources about vaccination, (2) people can access data and information, take existing resources and build new resources from them, and (3) people can connect and collaborate with other like-minded people, and, in doing so, enhance and enrich others' participation and the available set of resources)⁵

Nowadays, people have at least one social media account. The extent of its spread cannot be underestimated so that everyone becomes a consumer and a producer of fake news. Over the past five years, active users of social media have grown steadily. Data from We Are Social justifies the argument: 2.31 billion in 2016; 2.8 billion in 2017; 3.196 billion in 2018; 3.48 billion in 2019; and 3.8 billion by 2020. This illustration of numbers shows that more and more people want to be part of the unlimited digital space. However, in addition to its very advantages, social media is also a fertile ground for the spread of fake news throughout the world, thus catalyzing the formation of the post-truth era. Therefore, this article discusses how fake news develops amid an increasingly massive technology wave.

B. METHODS

This article uses a qualitative research approach. The author emphasizes the study of literature as a research method. Literature studies are useful for providing an overview of the problem or recent research, and usually, literature studies are used to evaluate the state of knowledge about a particular topic.⁶ By conducting a literature study, we can understand research in terms of detail, depth, and breadth of the topic to find gaps for further research. In addition, they also argue that by summarizing and combining certain literature, we can test hypotheses or theories.⁷

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Post-Truth Era as a Fertile Ground for Fake News

The development of information technology makes everything instant and fast, especially in receiving the news. The connection of the whole world to the internet makes

⁴ Fuchs, Christian. 2011. "Web 2.0, Prosumption and Surveillance." *Marketing, Consumption, and Surveillance*, Vol. 8, No. 3 288-309, p. 288.

⁵ Witterman, Holly O, and Brian J Zikmund-Fisher. 2012. "The Defining Characteristics of Web 2.0 and Their Potential Influence in the Online Vaccination Debate." *Vaccine*, Vol. 30, Issue. 25 3734-3740, p. 3.735.

⁶ Snyder, Hannah. 2019. "Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines." *Journal of Business Research* (104) 333-339, p. 334.

⁷ Xiao, Yu, and Maria Watson. 2019. "Guidance on Conducting a Systematic Literature Review." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (39)(1) 93-112, p. 93.

the world borderless. News media are also moving online in order to reach more levels of society. The creation of WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Telegram makes it easy for everyone to connect. Society can establish relationships with individuals in various parts of the world. However, with all the advantages it has, there are also disadvantages to watch out for. The internet does provide many conveniences for us, but in terms of information, convenience becomes a disaster. The easier it is for people to create and disseminate information, the more they forget good journalism rules. Information becomes difficult to verify because the flow of distribution moves very quickly.

Therefore, much information circulating that the truth is gray. This gray has the understanding that truth is not the main factor in making news. Today's society prefers facts that are in harmony with their emotions, not objective or authentic information. Emotions are the main factor in determining the truth of information. Objective facts have been replaced by news that can trigger people's emotions. As a result, the world is now familiar with the term post-truth. Many understandings have been spoken by experts and associate it with fake news. Normatively, post-truth is an expression of concern by those who care about the concept of truth and feel it is under attack.⁸ In other words, post-truth is a self-consciously grand term of epochal shift (trading heavily on assumptions about an 'era of truth' we once enjoyed).⁹ Post-truth is more about realizing that the definition or concept of truth is being questioned. Post-truth is more about sensitivity to changing times. However, the truth in question has a certain impetus or phenomenon that is why it is called that.

Post-truth is often associated with political phenomena, especially elections. The claim is not wrong. Elections are a matter of contestation about who occupies the highest position in a country, province, city, or district. Every candidate wants to win the election. Therefore, not infrequently, the way he does it is by spreading fake news. Although a candidate cannot spread fake news, the sympathizers or supporters of a party will do it. The reason behind the massive spread of fake news on various media channels is connected to the rise of fake news. Various examples can justify this claim. One of them is the phenomenon of Brexit, which will be completed this year. In 2016 the United Kingdom held a referendum to answer whether they should leave the European Union or not. The result surprised many parties where the most votes wanted "leave." In addition, more voters participated than in the previous general election, which was 77.2%.

The post-truth phenomenon occurs because the technological changes resulting in widespread social media usage and consequently a significant change in the media environment, compounded by public distrust in traditional political and media elites and expert knowledge, have formed the conditions of possibility for a post-truth politics to emerge.¹⁰ The referendum campaign for Brexit is also littered with false claims. One

⁸ McIntyre, Lee. 2018. *Post-truth*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, p. 6

⁹ Corner, John. 2017. "Fake News, Post-Truth, and Media-Political Change. *Media & Society* Vol. 39, No. 7 1100–1107.

¹⁰ Marshall, Hannah, and Alena Drieschova. 2018. "Post-Truth Politics in the UK's Brexit Referendum." *New Perspectives* Vol. 26, No. 3 89-105, p. 100

of the most prominent campaign claims during the EU referendum was that the UK sent £350 million per week to the EU and that instead, that money could be spent on the National Health Service (NHS).¹¹ These claims lead to public opinion that UK membership in the European Union needs to be terminated. In addition, the involvement of this technology is proven by the existence of a kind of political bot. Research from Bastos & Mercea (2019) found a Twitterbots network of 13,493 accounts spreading messages supporting the UK to "leave" from UK EU membership, which was deactivated or removed by Twitter shortly after polling stations closed.

From this fact, two things characterize the post-truth era. First is the public's distrust of traditional elites being reduced so that pro-people leaders emerge or the term is populist. The second thing that must be observed is that technological developments fuel the rise of false news or fake news. The emergence of social media has become an effective message echo to the community regardless of right or wrong. The spread of messages through social media is not judged on the accuracy of the facts but on the novelty or how many new things can be displayed.¹²

2. Fake News as an Infodemic

The Post-truth, when related to the current context, is interpreted quite accurately by the Oxford Dictionary where the point is that emotions replace objective facts in concluding: "in this era of post-truth politics, it's easy to cherry-pick data and come to whatever conclusion you desire' or 'some commentators have observed that we are living in a post-truth age."¹³ However, it is in a psychological setting where people tend to prioritize news related to the values they hold.

Fake news itself has its place in academic studies after the phenomenon that occurred in 2016. Nevertheless, "fake news" is more than an old deception strategy retrofitted for digital times.¹⁴ They are not a new phenomenon that happens but a practice that has been around for a long time. Wang explained the development of fake news simply:

"In the past, news reports were generated and distributed via conventional news media, such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and newsagents. However, in the Internet era, in addition to traditional news media, there are plenty of new media or channels delivering news, such as online news media, news aggregator websites, content websites, content farms, and social media."¹⁵

The difference lies in the media and the ease of distributing information to the public at large. When a writer acknowledges that fake news can construct chaos, the writer must articulate the motives behind fake news. The author emphasized "motives"

¹¹ Rise, Jonathan. 2017. "Brexit, Trump, and Post-Truth Politics." *Public Integrity*, 0 1-4.

¹² Ibid

¹³ Fuller, Steve. 2018. *Post-Truth: Knowledge as a Power Game*. New York: Anthem Press.

¹⁴ Waisbord, Silvio. 2018. "Truth is What Happen to News." *Journalism Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 13 1866-1878, p. 1.867.

¹⁵ Wang, Chh-Chien. 2020. "Fake News and Related Concepts: Definitions and Recent Research Development." *Contemporary Management Research*, Vol. 16, No. 3 145-174, pp. 145-146.

because there are many reasons for that. For example, five factors can cause a spread of fake news in Indonesia: 1) Power political motives that justify any means make hoaxes the most effective way to achieve goals; 2) Spread of hoaxes and hate speech is carried out in an organized manner. The evidence has shown by the arrest of the syndicate of hoax makers and spreaders; 3) The public does not yet have social awareness in selecting various information obtained through social media so that all information obtained is mostly swallowed up without checking the truth; 4) People or figures who have many followers and influence often abuse their influence by making or spreading their personal opinion regardless of the impact on society. These figures prioritize their own personal and group interests over national interests, and 5) Hoax has become a profitable business and industrial field.¹⁶ The writer acknowledged that not all of these motives are applicable in some parts of the world. As an empirical fact, most purveyors of fake news seem to be (a) motivated to mislead, like Drobota, or (b) motivated to make money by generating clicks, like the Macedonian teenagers.¹⁷ In other words, fake news motives always involved economic and political.

The existence of this fake news can endanger the stability of society and damage the state order. They can be a deadly 'weapon' for some people. For example, in politics, perspective and image are everything. Thus, it is not uncommon for discourse wars to occur. Moreover, sometimes, fake news is used as a means to bring down opponents. In fact, on the contrary, in a country with a populist leader, fake news is good ammunition. Yuval Noah Harari says that humanity prefers strength over truth.¹⁸ (Harari 2018) There is a certain period where this bot spreads fake news. In France, for example, when the general election took place between Macron and Marine Le Pen, Macron's email was leaked. The leak was immediately greeted with a campaign whose content contained fake news using bots. The bot itself is a software application that operates automatically by utilizing the internet. That is, they are designed to work systematically by certain parties.

France and the Brexit phenomenon have become a clear example of how fake news can shape public opinion so that the UK finally leaves the Federation. In addition, fake news can influence ongoing election politics. In addition, in Indonesia itself, many incidents are motivated by the existence of fake news. For example, the news that Ratna Sarumpaet was in the hospital because she was suspected of being attacked by an unknown party. Politicians also responded and gave statements. However, after being verified, the news was not true. This example shows how dangerous is fake news.

The WHO said that the world is not only facing a pandemic but also an infodemic. During this pandemic, fake news is also rampant. There are quite a few examples of fake news that have been distributed in the realm of social media. For example, fake news about four tons of eggs for social assistance to Garut, West Java, is rotten. This statement was later denied by the Head of the Logistics Division of the West

¹⁶ Septanto, Henri. 2018. "Pengaruh Hoax dan Ujaran Kebencian Sebuah Cyber Crime Dengan Teknologi Sederhana di Kehidupan Sosial Masyarakat." *Kalbiscientia*, Vol. 5, No. 2 157-162, p. 162.

¹⁷ Fallis, Don, and Kay Mathiesen. 2019. "Fake News is Counterfeit News." *Inquiry* 1-21, p. 12.

¹⁸ Harari, Yuval Noah. 2018. *21st Lesson for 21st Century*. New York: Spiegel & Grau, p. 208.

Java COVID-19 Handling Acceleration Task Force, Mohammad Arifin Soedjayana. Not only that, one of the fake news about COVID-19 drugs claimed lives. In Iran, more than 700 people died from consuming methanol, thinking it could cure COVID-19.¹⁹

Islam et al. (2020) studied the phenomenon of infodemic in 87 countries and 25 different languages. They identified 2,311 infodemics related to COVID-19. As a result, 2,049 (89%) of the reports were classified as rumors, 182 (7.8%) were conspiracy theories, and 82 (3.5%) were stigmatized. Among all tracked information, 24% relate to disease, transmission, and death rates; 21% were control interventions; 19% about care and treatment; 15% is the cause of this pandemic and its beginnings; 1% is a matter of violence, and 20% is something else. Of the 2,276 reports for which text ratings were available, 1,856 claims were false (82%), 204 were correct (9%), 176 were misleading (8%), and 31 were not proven (1%).²⁰

These data show that the infodemic is a real threat in society. Moreover, the community is in one large digital network. When individuals search for sources of information through Google, they provide the data for Google's algorithm to analyze. So, with habits like this, the algorithm can predict people's preferences according to the data that has been obtained. Google is a huge source of data. The community is in one large digital network. When individuals search for sources of information through Google, they provide the data for Google's algorithm to analyze. So, with habits like this, the algorithm can predict people's preferences according to the data that has been obtained. Google is a huge source of data.

3. The Immediate Impact

When playing on social media, individuals often get information that is uniform with what they believe. For example, when we often look for information about the spirit, the algorithm will adjust according to what we are looking for. This effect is also known as filter bubbles. The general understanding is a digital phenomenon where there is filtering information tailored to our thinking or the like so that the algorithm will start working and provide appropriate content. That is, a large—and ever-increasing—share of news consumers rely on algorithmically curated environments in which algorithms automatically select personalized news based on information about individual news consumers.²¹

Nguyen calls them Epistemic Bubbles. He said, *"an epistemic bubble is a social epistemic structure which has inadequate coverage through a process of exclusion by omission. Epistemic bubbles form by leaving out relevant epistemic sources, rather than actively*

¹⁹ Forrest, Adam. 2020. Coronavirus: 700 dead in Iran after drinking toxic methanol alcohol to 'cure Covid-19'. April 28. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/coronavirus-iran-deaths-toxic-methanol-alcohol-fake-news-rumours-a9487801.html>.

²⁰ Islam, et.al. 2020. "COVID-19 Related Infodemic and Its Impact on Public Health: A Global Social Media Analysis." *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 1621-1629, p. 1622.

²¹ Haim, Mario, Andreas Graefe, and Hans-Bernd Brosius. 2017. "Burst of the Filter Bubble?" *Digital Journalism* 1-15, p. 1.

discrediting them."²² In other words, as a result of algorithms adapting our information-seeking habits, intellectually, we become more isolated. Not to discredit other news sources, but the algorithm creates its own space for individuals not contaminated with other perspectives. Individuals do not refuse but do not know.

Bozdag & Hoven (2015) has slightly demonstrated the effect of filter bubbles. They examined how the differences between Democracy and the effect of the filter bubble on understanding the concept. The result shows that different democracy theories emphasize different aspects of the filter bubble, whether it is the loss of autonomy, the decrease in the epistemic quality of information, losing the ability for effective contestation, or losing effective channels that display the performance of the governing bodies.²³ On the other hand, social media makes people only listen to homogeneous voices and even discredit them. This phenomenon is also known as echo chambers. At first glance, these concepts may seem similar, but Nguyen points out a difference between echo chambers and filter bubbles:

"An epistemic bubble is an epistemic structure emerging from the informational architecture of communities, social networks, media, and other sources of information and argument. It is an impaired informational topology – a structure with poor connectivity. An echo chamber, on the other hand, is an epistemic structure created through the manipulation of trust; it can exist within a healthy informational topology by adding a superstructure of discredit and authority."²⁴

When the filter bubble filters information based on suitability and relevance, and preference, the echo chamber takes it into homogenization of information. The point is that the individual only gets information according to what he believes. In other words, the echo chamber has an individual intervention. People tend to look for justifications for their views to make them look for information that supports their beliefs. However, Guo, Rohde, & Wu (2016) consider that criticism of the echo chamber effect is premature. Their research on the relationship between opinion leaders and the echo chamber on Twitter shows that depending on who leads the opinion can determine whether people are trapped in heterogeneity or homogeneity. They say that different opinion leaders make varying contributions to the nature of the Twitter community network, suggesting that an overarching conclusion about all Twitter networks is not essential for a better understanding of political communication on the social media platform.²⁵

Research from Barbera, et. al. regarding the ideological preferences of 3.8 million Twitter users related to twelve political and non-political issues, shows that when it comes to non-political issues, netizens are less attached to their ideology. However, they

²² Nguyen, C. Thi. 2018. "Echo Chambers and Epistemic Bubbles." *Episteme* 1-21, p. 3.

²³ Bozdag, Engin, and Jeroen Van Den Hoven. 2015. "Breaking the Filter Bubble: Democracy and Design." *Ethics Information Technology* Vol. 17 249-265, p. 263.

²⁴ Nguyen, op.cit., p. 2.

²⁵ Guo, Lei, Jacob A Rohde, and H. Denis Wu. 2016. "Who is Responsible for Twitter's Echo Chamber Problem? Evidence from 2016 U.S. Election Networks." *Information, Communication & Society* 1-19, p. 15.

are more likely to pass along information that fits their ideological preferences when it comes to political issues.²⁶

The impact of Filter bubbles and echo chambers is still not very visible because many factors are at play. However, when someone consumes news filtered according to their preferences, one individual to another will have a different point of view. The difference in the content they read affects their perception of something. For example, in Indonesia, the Jokowi and Prabowo camps, for example, have the right point of view about Indonesia; their supporters prefer the candidate they support. Thus, the "Us vs Them" dichotomy emerges. A clear example of this phenomenon is when a photo poses with one finger, it is assumed to support the number one candidate pair. There is also a debate between climate change support and climate denialism where there are strongholds who say that climate change is real and others reject the claim. Of course, they have different points of view.

The dichotomy of "Us vs Them" creates a distance called Tribalism. Each camp is more inclined to the in-group because of the similarity of values than the out-group who have different views because they see the world from a different lens.²⁷ It is these differences that cause conflict because each of them remains firm in their respective opinions. There is no room for discussion and brainstorming. Especially if this happens in the social media space, polarization will be created because of favoritism towards a view. Moreover, with the filter bubble from the algorithm and echo chambers. The combination of these three things can cause much controversy on social media.

Not only fake news but there are also other consequences due to increasingly massive technological developments. We know it as a deep fake, and this can be far-reaching than fake news. In a broad definition, it is called digital deception. Digital deception is commonly recognized as deceptive or misleading content created and disseminated to cause public or personal harm (e.g., post-truth, populism, and satire) or to obtain a profit (e.g., clickbait, cloaking, ad farms, and identity theft).²⁸ When it comes to deep fake, they are often in videos to explain the following definitions. Deepfake as videos is the product of artificial intelligence or machine-learning applications that merge, combine, replace and superimpose images and video clips onto a video, creating a fake video that appears authentic.²⁹

The Deepfake program uses Google's image search, explores social media websites, and then, on its own, enters data to replace the faces in videos almost

²⁶ Barbera, Pablo, John T Jost, Jonathan Nagler, Joshua A Tucker, and Richard Bonneau. 2015. "Tweeting from Left to Right: Is Online Political Communication More Than an Echo Chamber." *Psychological Science* 1-12, p. 10.

²⁷ Greene, Joshua. 2013. *Moral Tribes: Emotion, Reason, and The Gap Between Us and Them*. New York: The Penguin Press, p. 68-69.

²⁸ Fraga-Lamas, Paula, and Tiago M Fernandez-Carames. 2020. "Fake News, Disinformation, and Deepfakes: Leveraging Distributed Ledger Technologies and Blockchain to Combat Digital Deception Counterfeit Reality." 53-59, p. 54.

²⁹ Maras, Marie-Helen, and Alex Alexandrou. 2018. "Determining Authenticity of Video Evidence In the Age of Artificial Intelligence and In the Wake of Deepfake Videos." *The International Journal of Evidence and Proof* 1-8, p. 1.

flawlessly.³⁰ Deepfakes are not only in the form of videos but also images, sounds, et cetera. Microsoft once made images of world-famous artists, namely Rembrandt, with 3D printing technology combined with algorithms. Floridi calls this phenomenon ectypes. The word comes from Greek, and it has a subtle meaning that is quite useful here: an ectype is a copy, yet not any copy, but rather a copy that has a special relationship with its source (the origin of its creation), the archetype.³¹

Deepfakes can be used for negative things. These videos can be used for revenge porn (sharing of X-rated videos or images of a person without their permission; the preferred term is 'image-based abuse'), bullying, video evidence, political sabotage, propaganda, blackmail, and even fake news, which consists of methodical disinformation and propaganda that distorts actual news and facts by replacing knowledge with false images and information.³² Our data is scattered in the digital space, starting from our photos, videos, and voices. Artificial intelligence is just taking it and processing it into something, whether it is good or bad. Economic motives can be one of the catalysts to make this deep fake because it is a fertile market. In addition, deep fakes can be a huge economic advantage.

For example, porn videos that use the faces of Gal Gadot and Scarlett Johansson as porn stars. Additionally, an Obama video appeared saying Trump was dipshit made by Hollywood director Jordan Peele and BuzzFeed. They made the video intending to educate the public. Even though this video is fake, it has been watched by 7.5 million people. People are not able to distinguish between real and fake. These videos show how technology is capable of creating content. Other examples of deep fakes have also been used for political purposes. In India's council elections last February, a video of the Chairman of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Manoj Thawari, went viral on WhatsApp. In the video, he criticized incumbent Arvind Kejriwal, and the video went viral on WhatsApp. The video is in two languages: Haryanvi and English. The video results from a partnership between BJP IT Cell and political communication firm The Ideas Factory. Deep fake technology has helped us scale campaign efforts like never before," Neelkant Bakshi, the co-in charge of social media and IT for BJP Delhi, tells VICE.³³ In India, Muslim women activists are also victims where their faces are made in porn videos.

In addition, the use of deep fakes also has implications for political coups. In 2019, the President of Gabon had been suffering from illness since October 2018 and had been through intensive care in Saudi Arabia and London. However, the Gabon government has not delivered any news regarding the progress of his treatment. People in Gabon and observers outside the country were growing suspicious about the President's well-being, and the government's lack of answers only fueled doubts; some

³⁰ Ibid, p. 2.

³¹ Floridi, Luciano. 2018. "Artificial Intelligence, Deepfakes and a Future of Ectypes." *Philosophy Technology* 1-5, p. 3.

³² Maras, Marie-Helen, and Alex Alexandrou. Op.cit., p. 3.

³³ Christopher, Nilesh. 2020. We've Just Seen the First Use of Deepfakes in an Indian Election Campaign. February 18. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/jgedjb/the-first-use-of-deepfakes-in-indian-election-by-bjp>.

even said he was dead.³⁴ Thus, creating rumors circulating about the President. The Vice President, on December 9, finally said that the President had suffered a stroke but was in good condition and would give a New Year's speech. On January 1, 2019, a video of the President's speech appeared. However, there are some oddities; his eyes never blink or move, His body seems to be locked in place in his chair while his hands stick together in front of him.³⁵ The Gabon military decided that the President was no longer suitable and launched a coup but failed.

Another case arose in celebrity circles where videos of Jay-Z rapping Billy Joel's *We did not start the fire* and Hamlet's "to be or not to be." Disagree with the video, Jay-Z's company, Roc Nation, filed a video takedown notice to YouTube.³⁶ The video creator, Vocal Synthesis, said that he had no malicious intent to produce the video. The lawsuit was rejected because it did not have a clear legal basis in the US Copyright Act.

Thanks to digital imaging technology and easy access to applications from Adobe, Apple, Google, and Microsoft, it has never been so easy to mislead the eye with tampered images or video.³⁷ Everyone who has the skills plus the necessary tools and applications can create this deep fake easily. Moreover, the world is increasingly digitized, and it is very easy to distribute it on social media channels. Moreover, today's society has become dependent on social media for information.

From this phenomenon, we can see how the development of this technology can make videos that are similar to the original. The use of a large google database makes making this video possible with AI as the basis. Maras & Alexandrou describe the capabilities of this deep fake quite clearly:

“Deep fake videos provide the ability to swap one person’s face onto another in a video clip or an image. The technology that creates these videos is designed to continuously improve its performance. Specifically, the algorithm that creates the fake videos learns, and improves the videos by continuing to mimic the individual’s facial expressions, gestures, voice and variations, making them more and more realistic.”³⁸

However, if we consider the current development of AI, much potential can be unleashed. AI will continue to evolve to an undetermined extent. A lot of the potential of AI is yet to be explored. Moreover, many free deep fake applications are now spread on the internet, and everyone can make them. Thus, the internet poses a latent danger, plus technology is still evolving. We still have not seen the limit. Individuals, businesses, and society as a whole may face novel forms of extortion as well as additional risks for

³⁴ Breland, Ali. 2019. The Bizarre and Terrifying Case of the “Deepfake” Video that Helped Bring an African Nation to the Brink. March 15. <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2019/03/deepfake-gabon-ali-bongo/>.

³⁵ Joplin, Ty. 2019. A Military Coup in Gabon Inspired by a Potential Deepfake Video is Our Political Future. May 8. <https://www.albawaba.com/news/military-coup-gabon-inspired-potential-deepfake-video-our-political-future-1284760>.

³⁶ Beaumont-Thomas, Ben. 2020. Jay-Z takes action against 'deepfakes' of him rapping Hamlet and Billy Joel. April 29. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/apr/29/jay-z-files-takes-action-against-deepfakes-of-him-rapping-hamlet-and-billy-joel>.

³⁷ Maras, Marie-Helen, and Alex Alexandrou, loc.cit.

³⁸ Ibid, p. 1.

democracy and national security.³⁹ Everyone can be the person being threatened and the party being threatened. All sectors can have an impact from disinformation and misinformation. While fake news revolves around making news that is not following journalistic rules, deep fakes are more varied in form and method.

Deep fakes can be used for both positive and negative purposes. Technology is neutral depending on its use. However, that does not mean there are no potential solutions to detect and protect us from deep fakes. Fraga-Lamas & Fernandez-Carames studied how to use Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLT) and found six potential solutions. DLT can be used independently or combined, each with different technical requirements for robustness, scalability, performance, interoperability, or privacy.⁴⁰

Fake news is a phenomenon that re-emerges due to the acceleration of technology. The widespread use of social media and fake news are two things that cannot be separated. The more people depend on social media; the more fake news will spread. From this, some conclusions can be drawn, namely that humans become addicted to social media because all information in content and videos can be obtained there. Plus, there are frequent additions of new features that pamper the community. Technology is still developing because humans need it more and more to become an immediate need besides clothing, shelter, and food. In addition, if we look at the lifestyle of today's society, it is very common for humans to continue to depend on technology and the internet.

The illustration above is depicted in the Documentary Film the Social Dilemma. There are important lessons to be learned from this film. First, there is a certain psychological impact when a teenager is kept away from technology. There is a feeling of Fear of Missing Out, worries about missing the latest information, et cetera. Individuals feel they have to be constantly updated on the latest news, and it weighs on them when it comes to keeping away with technology. Second, content is getting easier to create. Much circulating content serves the public. However, because of the increasing number, it is not yet certain whether the information is accurate, as a teenager in the film The Social Dilemma who listens to a certain political trend that makes him inaccurate. It affects their attitudes and actions. Towards the end of the film, the teenager was arrested for being involved in a demonstration by a certain group.

The film cannot generalize the impact that technology has on our society. However, it is necessary to reflect on how dangerous fake news is and its impact on society. The most common impact is a misunderstanding. Moreover, as more and more people are starting to abandon objective facts and follow their emotions according to their beliefs, fake news will be difficult to combat. Such a reality that we live in. Social media is indeed a powerful communication tool, but social media is a double-edged sword in this context. Plus, current trends and algorithms supporting clickbait content make filtering difficult. Even though the algorithms can be changed, they follow the market demand that does not change. In this day and age, content is king and whoever

³⁹ Fraga-Lamas, Paula, and Tiago M Fernandez-Carames. Op.cit., p. 55.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 57.

can create interesting content is the winner. It is like the law of the jungle on the internet, where the algorithm is the judge.

In addition, fake news is a growing industry. With such an algorithm mechanism, it will be easy to create clickbait content, regardless of whether the content it creates is genuine or not, fact or fake. Most importantly, the perpetrator can get the coffers of traffic and the number of clicks that people make. From fake news, an individual can prosper in life. Furthermore, it also depends on what kind of momentum can generate much attention in the digital world. Plus, fake news can be a weapon that can defeat political opponents. In a political context, this is even more dangerous because politics is a sensitive issue where perception and branding are everything. There have been many examples where fake news is used to achieve political ends. Not infrequently, they will use bots to shape public perception. Even though they are not politicians, it is their sympathizers who need to be wary of. Plus, the digital space is a space to practice democracy. Freedom is a principle in the digital world. Everyone is free to produce any content as long as there is no law.

Moreover, people are more active in cyberspace. That is because people are free to express their thoughts and can reach many people. In addition, no law specifically regulates the dynamics of the digital space. The trending topic issue is a real example of how wild the digital world is.

Digital literacy is a vital ability to face the challenges of fake news in the future. Fake news will not disappear; therefore, the public needs to respond to various information received or shared. In a sense, Digital Literacy is the ability to understand and use information from various digital sources and regard it as literacy in the digital era. In addition, digital literacy involves more than the ability to use software or operate digital devices; it covers a wide range of complex cognitive, motor, sociological, and emotional skills, which users need to function effectively in a digital environment.⁴¹ Therefore, skills such as critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and awareness of the "network of people" and others are very important.

D. CONCLUSION

The benefits of technology for life will also cause losses because technology is neutral, and its fluidity depends on its use. Fake news and its derivatives are a consequence of the negative use of technology for society. The impact is also bad for society and the country. However, we must also consider the role of society in accelerating the negative impacts of technology. Indeed, the existence of social media can provide seamless connectivity to its users and provide the required speed. However, if it is not balanced with good literacy skills, society will fall into a false narrative created by a few people. Moreover, people who are not well literate will easily get trapped and trust information as long as it is within the corridor of their beliefs.

⁴¹ Eshet-Akai, Yoram. 2004. "Digital Literacy: A Conceptual Framework for Survival Skills in the Digital Era." *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, Vol. 13, No. 1 93-106, p. 93.

Infodemic will always be public consumption because the market is on the rise and can earn big profits. We cannot avoid the development of this era. Moreover, everything can be threatened and a threat with technology that is increasingly distributed to all levels of society. However, the wise use of social media and qualified literacy is the key to dealing with the so-called infodemic. In this era, vigilance and foresight must be increased.

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