Social Media Literacy of Indonesian Female Digital Immigrants in Identifying Hoax News

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Abstract. This study arose from a premise that female digital immigrants are assumed to be more vulnerable to hoax news on social media and tend to disseminate them due to their "natural" tendency, whereas they have important roles as role models and educators for their children. The research investigates how Indonesian female digital immigrants identify hoax news and how they avoid hoax news on social media. Fifteen women aged between thirty and forty years old with various backgrounds of education and having been using social media were selected as the informants. The data were collected using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. By employing Critical Discourse Analysis the study reveals that in majority the informants indicate that they are quite careful in responding the news or information found on social media. Accordingly, not all female digital immigrants cannot be considered susceptible to hoax news and hoax news disseminator on social media.

Keywords: digital immigrants, hoax news, social media literacy, Critical Discourse Analysis

1. Introduction

Social media today is becoming a vital part of our lives. Nearly every single activity requires social media usage, especially in this pandemic time that we are facing. When everyone is locked and isolated during the pandemic, social media helps to bring themselves out through the digital world. Flew (in Watie, 2011: p. 70) reveals that this phenomenon arose because social media which is classified as new media allows its users to take advantages of the infinity space that social media has, to broaden their networks as wide as possible, and show their different identities which are contrary compared to their real ones in the real world. Social media itself has a definition that relates to what Flew has uttered. According to Akram and Kumar (2017), "a social media is an online platform which people use to build social networks or social relations with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections" (p. 347).

As the year passes by, social media users have increased significantly. Through research, the number of them is proven to be growing. Kemp (2022), conducted research about social media users' statistics which shows a result that the social media users around

the world reach 4,62 billion people as of January 2022 (par. 24). This amount is equal to more than a half of the world's total population which exhibits that those big numbers today are active social media users. Kemp (2022) states that meanwhile, in Indonesia, an equivalent to 68.9 percent of the whole population are social media users in January 2022 (par. 19). This number is the same as 191.4 million people in the country. The data implicitly tell that social media is a beneficial platform that nowadays can not be left behind.

Using social media is an enjoyable activity that everybody loves to do. Due to its amusing trait, social media can be remarkably addictive. Gunawan et al. (2020) say that internet or social media addiction is a condition in which a person uses the internet extensively and is unable to control it. This leads to undesirable tendencies. This addiction is the negative effect of social media use that needs to be gotten rid of. The main reason why people are being attached to social media is called as fear of missing out (FOMO). According to Zanah and Rahardjo (2020), FOMO is the fear or anxiety of missing out on a pleasurable experience, which is defined by a need to be continually connected to what others are doing on the internet (especially social media) when the individual is offline. Thus, every social media user has a particular desire to always be on it the whole day.

Social media addiction could drive to the condition where people do not pay attention to the actual usage of it. They concentrate on relishing what makes them happy instead of knowing how to control themselves in using it. Moreover, there are high possibilities of absorbing every content served on social media and its values whether it is valuable or not. This is why abundant pieces of information sometimes are incorrectly captured which are risky because ones may believe and follow the information they catch since they think the information is advantageous.

Rohmiyati (2018) mentions that basically, the information spreading model is the spiral of science that was put forward by Elisabeth Noelle Neumann in 1974. This theory explains the impact of information dissemination through mass media. According to this model, the size of the influence of the mass media depends on the interaction between the mass media, interpersonal communication, and a person's perception of his own opinion in relation to the opinions of others in the surrounding community. An opinion of somebody here is crucial because everyone can view every content differently according to their perspectives. Hence, a perspective is playing an important role in this context.

Someone's perspective could affect to the information they absorb. In accordance with this, such factual information can be falsely consumed and fake information may be assumed as the real ones. According to Triartanto (in Ilahi, 2018: p. 101) fake news or commonly known as hoax news are described as texts that spread fake information or misleading messages through social media, leading readers to believe they can believe anything, especially the contents inside them.

Due to the fact that every person was born with their own gifts and uniqueness, it can be clearly seen that everyone has their own point of view, beliefs, and understanding in assessing certain content on social media. In accordance with this, there is a term in the digital world named digital literacy. Martin (in Kurnianingsih et al., 2017:62) explained that digital literacy is the knowledge, attitude, and capacity of people to use digital

instruments accurately to access, manage, integrate, and evaluate digital technological devices, apply the knowledge, develop creative expressions, and interact with others in the context of particular situations in life, in order to allow positive social action and to reflect on this process. Having a digital literacy, a person is able to define what content they want to see, what information they need, and how to behave on social media. Regarding the current condition that social media is both disruptive and opportunistic, the implementation of digital literacy among the users is what we require today. Mulyasih (2017) adds that digital literacy appeared because of the almost unstoppable flow of information, lots of useful and useless information are served on the social media and they are consumed by the whole of the users, especially children and women who are vulnerable to be influenced by social media contents.

Women are creatures who use feelings and sensitivity to do anything in their lives. Moreover, they are having a high level of empathy. This situation makes most of them to be frail social media users who do not think further in assessing social media contents. Every content is acceptable as long as it touches their heart. In the end, many incorrect and fake contents are easily spread and women are being worried to be the main suspect spreaders. According to the research held by Gelgel et al. (2020), it is found that male respondents are reported to be more concerned than female respondents and to be less likely to ignore material that may be a hoax. Digital literacy stands in this phenomenon, it is needed the most by women since they are considered not to have a proper digital literacy in utilizing social media. Gelgel et al. (2020) states that it has been shown that women are more likely than males to fall for hoaxes. Women are observed ignoring hoaxes on social media, and they hardly ever double-check the data they acquired from their devices.

Indonesian women's digital literacy is indeed demanded to be improved. This necessity is supported by the fact that until today, hoaxes in Indonesia are still widely spread by women. Gelgel et al. (2020) tells that even if their functional skills are greater than their critical skills, women in Indonesia scored moderately on their ability to use technology. It has been discovered that women are better at consuming than presuming. Indonesian women required to update their skills for that through a program for digital literacy. According to Yuniar et al. (2019), women in Indonesia commonly share hoaxes without any intentions of spreading false news. When forwarding, they are triggered by the misunderstandings about ways to recognize the credibility of media sources. Additionally, most of the women hoax spreaders do not have an understanding of the definition and characteristics of hoaxes, do not know how to check facts, but feel the need to spread information. It can be summed up that the lack of knowledge on how to plunge in on social media is the cause they do so. Limilia and Aristi (2019) points out that in these late years, the government is quite vigorous in carrying out campaigns for digital literacy. One of the examples is the establishment of various programs and digital literacy movements, such as *SiBerkreasi Kominfo* (a national digital literacy movement that supports and spreads positive contents on social media). Semuel (nama penulis beritanya saja) (Detik.com, 2022) believes that when women are equipped with great digital literacy, they possibly become hoaxes prevention agents who fight against incorrect news

which are likely to divide the nation. Thus, it is undoubtedly an urgency to influence women with digital literacy as supplies for them surfing in this digital world.

A large number of research regarding Indonesian women's digital literacy have been conducted in these recent years. Nevertheless, none of them examined the digital literacy of women in a PKK group (a program at a village level to educate women on various aspects of family welfare) in Gedongan Village, Colomadu District, Karanganyar Regency. Therefore, this is the research gap in this study. To go further, the novelty of this research is in the type of research (ethnographic), the focus of the study (hoax news on YouTube), data sources (informants), and theory (Critical Discourse Analysis). Meanwhile, the first sole purpose of this study is to find out whether women in that PKK group have the ability to differentiate between hoax news and non-hoax news. Second, find out the strategies they use in distinguishing correct news from incorrect news. Other than that, this research can act as supporting data for future probes and a tool to figure out the digital literacy that most Indonesian women have.

2. Method

This qualitative study involved 15 informants who were recruited through a snowball sampling technique targeting women of 30 up to 40 years of age having an Android phone and having been using social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and or YouTube or messengers such as WhatsApp or Telegram regardless of their education and professions. The informants live in the suburban area in the regency of Karanganyar, Central Java Indonesia. The informants have different educational background from mostly senior high school graduates (14 people) to bachelor graduate (1 person). Moreover, they are mostly housewives, several factory workers and a senior high vocational school teacher. The data were collected through in-depth interviews. Thus, the results are in the forms of transcripts of dialogue between the informants and the research assistants who visited them in their houses. The interviews were carried out upon the appointment between the research assistants and the informants at their houses at their convenience. The interviews were conducted as relaxed as possible to avoid psychological pressure to many of the informants. To validate the data, four FGDs with the informants were conducted. They aimed to ensure the data obtained through the interviews are valid.

3. Result

The results of the research are obtained from the interviews and surveys. As a result of this research process, which included gathering information from 15 informants, several other answers were discovered, which confirmed a fascinating hypothesis. Voice recordings, photographs, and transcripts present the research findings. These materials are then transcribed and converted into data tables, which display the percentage of how the hypotheses will be formulated. The findings of the study will be presented as part of some layers, with each layer discussing a different aspect of the topic at hand: how prominent and influential social media is for the continuity of information delivery in the digital era; how digital literacy involves the continued influence of social media among women; how women's behaviors are when receiving hoax news or at the same time as

perpetrators in spreading hoax news; and how dangerous hoax news can be in their family scope, especially to children.

At first, Indonesian women became suspect of an increase in the spread of hoax information on social media since there was a perceived increase in the number of hoax posts. In light of these issues, the lack of digital literacy is the area of concern that has received the most attention as a potential contributor to Indonesia's growing number of hoaxes. In Indonesia, it is not considered inappropriate to suspect someone without having any proof; an interpretation and proof are required for every hypothesis. 14 informants were chosen to serve as representatives of the evidence; this was done because digital immigrants are one of the generations that are most vulnerable to being swayed by the news or information that is rapidly spreading in the society.

The evidence is in the form of data and it contains several claims along with the percentages that apply to them. An exciting finding from the research is that as many as 78.57 percent of women show that they spread information solely to help others. Since women are beings who prioritize their feelings, this is also proven when they get interesting and helpful information, which will be immediately shared with others so that others can benefit. The current issue is that women, with all their self-centered characteristics, are seen competing to spread information just to be seen as more prominent and human beings with the most excellent understanding.

In reality, this issue is not absolute and has not been proven; the truth is that a woman spreads information because she wants to assist others, particularly concerning helpful information. Up to 42.85 percent of respondents said that before they passed on the news or information they had obtained, they would first read it to comprehend the contents of the information thoroughly. The message's sender intends to spread the news, which can be proven by what was said by the 4th informant "I identify myself among the group of those who are curious. Therefore, I read everything that is in the news or the information, regardless of how important it is. Never skip." But as many as 35.71 percent of women did not make an effort to investigate where the source of the message was and immediately spread it as long as when they read and understood the information, it was seen as incoming information. This was the case regardless of whether or not they believed the information to be accurate. However, only a few genuinely explored the source of information being shared around as long as it is reasonable and satisfactory in all aspects.

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, regarding the uniqueness of women in general, women tend to choose activities or things that they like, even though it's simply not their needs that they have to fulfill. For instance, in the lives of some women, reading information or news has become a hobby or habit. In this situation, reading information requires a skill known as digital literacy, which specifies that the data or information obtained should be thoroughly inspected and processed before being shared with other people or archived by the individual. The topic of the transmitted information is also a factor that influences a person's ability to employ digital literacy skills in discovering and organizing information.

Digital literacy is also a skill that all women should have. They will read it repeatedly if the subject being discussed is something they like. Cooking recipes, information on the dangers of skincare ingredients in certain products, and many other topics associated with women seem to be examples of subjects that can be read multiple times. As an example of this as well as proof of it, as discovered in the process of interviewing respondents for this research. The ninth informant said that "aside that which pertains to education, the answer is, yes, the majority of the time, cooking. My favorite things to look up are new recipes to try. The vast majority of the time, I do." There was another informant who stated that the news that was happening appeared to be more interesting. As stated by the 4th informant, "I prefer to read the information that is happening, for example in a few months ago, which was about the election problem, viral artists, klitih news yesterday, and I also followed the topic of Korean dramas."

4. Discussion

Literacy in digital media is crucial for the continuation of this research; the data was collected from interviews with 14 women around the age of 35 who are known as digital immigrants. There are several reasons why there has been an increase in the number of hoaxes spread in Indonesia, but one of the supporting aspects is thought to be digital immigrants.

Women must have a working knowledge of Internet search engines to achieve digital literacy. It will help them acquire the required information in a thoughtful, intelligent, and responsible manner. The findings of this study, which relate to comprehending digital literacy while responding to social media engagement, include the following:

1. Activities on social media.

   The habits and perspectives of digital immigrants, as used on social media, significantly impact the conversations that take place around linked topics. For instance, how frequently they use their mobile phones to look for and read content on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. In addition, the type of social media that people use appears to play a major role in determining whether or not the community has allegations regarding digital immigrants. This is because each social media application has unique capabilities and a unique virtual scope. This research has established that WhatsApp, Facebook, Google, TikTok, and Instagram are the most popular social media applications. This is because users find them simpler to operate and that they provide comprehensive information. For example, in this case, during the interviews, eight of the fourteen informants demonstrated that each social media application possesses a distinct style. Furthermore, how users respond to recent issues will also impact the extent to which information will be distributed via social media.

   The first data point is that digital immigrants have a lower rate of cell phone usage than digital natives. This is likely because digital immigrants are less familiar with effectively using social media and are more reluctant to enter the digital world. The first informant stated, "I'm terrified of social media nowadays," while the eighth informant stated, "I don't comprehend technology like this."

Data 2 demonstrates that digital immigrants are more likely to consult their mobile devices in search of knowledge on matters that interest them. For instance, regarding movie recommendations and food recipes. The second informant stated, "I prefer to read cooking recipes, and if I just want to read the recipe, I usually only go on Google, but if I want to see the tutorial, it's on YouTube."

The third piece of data implies that digital immigrants are more likely to utilize their mobile phones to access information from applications that help them feel at ease. TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Google, and Youtube are some of the most popular applications used by sources of information. For instance, what the sixth informant had to say about it "Even though I only occasionally post on social media, I can say with complete truthfulness that if I am invited to join a group on Facebook, I do it without delay. There are already a great number of people (on Facebook), right?" The seventh informant stated that Google was a source of information for her. In contrast, the sixth informant admitted to reading the material using the Instagram app. Meanwhile, the eleventh and fourteenth informants, who are more at ease using audio-visual-based applications, confirmed that most of the material they use comes from TikTok and Youtube.

2. Insights that distinguish between false and true information.

As a result of point number one, we can reach the premise that there are still digital immigrants who are aware of how to act correctly while managing social media, of course, and who have abilities in digital literacy. The more open-minded someone is, the broader their breadth of knowledge will be, and the more they will desire to understand how their perspectives differ from those of others. Women, who are referred to as digital immigrants in this study, play a vital role in showing whether or not Indonesian women are a symbol of hoaxes in Indonesia. Based on the findings of the research that has been carried out, it is clear that their perspectives on the positive and negative aspects of a news article. For instance, we take the example of the outcomes of interviews carried out with the fourth informant, where one of the housewives with high digital literacy skills can differentiate between reliable and unreliable sources of information. The perspective on the reality of the news is crucial, mainly because a mother figure will be a child's primary educator.

In subsequent stages of the research, in addition to conducting interviews, members of the research team paid a lot of attention to the informant's body language. The fact that the research is conducted through direct communication and that it takes quite some time to create engagement between the research team and the informants makes it fairly difficult to make body language the primary focus of the study. there is a certain level of reluctance in them to share their experiences, whether or not they are willing to make their previous experiences into objects of research, and how responsive they are to answering interview queries related to the digital age, which is a new world for them as digital immigrants.

A misunderstanding of the information that has been communicated might lead to issues of any size. Body language, specific head gestures and gaze, and eye contact signals

can often be used to distinguish subtle subtext in order to determine which information a person openly reveals on the basis of honesty and knowledge and which information indicates they are lying. This ability is necessary in order to determine which information they are lying about. This study used Critical Discourse Analysis to invent the social phenomenon that happened between digital immigrants and digital age. The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) discipline is important due to the fact that determining the themes of the discourse is an essential part of gaining a comprehension of texts.

5. Conclusion

So far, in many societies housewives were considered by many as agents who easily disseminate hoax news. Moreover, those who belong to digital immigrants were more likely judged to become the central perpetrators in sharing hoax news through social media and messengers. The assumption arose since the group of digital immigrants in this study refers to housewives and women having the criteria mentioned in advance who just knew about Android or internet phone not since their childhood. Nearly all of them commenced to use Android phone since the last few years and therefore their literacy about using an Android phone itself is still minimal. They mostly use it for accessing social media and messenger (WhatsApp). Thus, the euphoria of using Android phones and the low literacy in using social media can lead to the tendency of easily forwarding hoax news and or considering hoax news as the right ones.

Nevertheless, the study suggests that nearly all the informants show if they are quite careful in receiving messages through messengers or watching news videos on YouTube. They do not have a specific technique or strategy in differentiating a hoax news from the valid one. However, they are susceptible to disinformation on several news portal or social media, which can also lead to hoax news spreading. Accordingly, improving their literacy on using internet phone and social media is necessary.

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