Covid-19; Hoax and Efforts to Prevent it from the Perspective of Islamic Law

A Mufrod Teguh Mulyo

Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia
mufrod.teguh@unu.ac.id

Abstract:

The development of an era or what is commonly known as globalization indicates progress in all fields, such as technology, transportation, information, and communication. These advances certainly impact all aspects of life in the world, making it easier to actualize. The consequence of this convenience is the frequent dissemination of hoax information on social media. Thus, this paper will discuss the review of Islamic law related to hoaxes and their prevention efforts in the Covid-19 case study. This study uses a descriptive-analytical approach, which describes a review of Islamic law related to hoaxes and how to prevent them in the millennial era. The results of this study, we must refer to the Qur'an because it is a preventive measure to deal with the reporting of hoax news, Allah condemns someone who brings false news, and in the Qur'an, it is explained so that Muslims always tell the truth and based on facts, every Muslim must be patient and critically examine the information that emerges.

Key Words: *Islamic Law, Hoax, Covid-19*

Abstrak:

Perkembangan suatu era atau yang biasa dikenal dengan sebutan globalisasi mengindikasikan bahwa terdapat kemajuan dalam segala bidang, seperti teknologi, transportasi, informasi dan komunikasi. Kemajuan tersebut pastinya memberikan dampak pada seluruh aspek kehidupan yang ada di dunia semakin mudah dalam aktualisasinya. Konsekuensi yang timbul dari kemudahan tersebut ialah sering terjadinya penyebaran informasi hoax di media sosial. Dengan demikian, dalam paper ini akan dibahas tentang tinjauan hukum Islam terkait hoaks dan upaya pencegahannya dalam studi kasus Covid-19. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif-analisis, yaitu menggambarkan tinjauan hukum Islam terkait hoaks dan bagaimana upaya pencegahannya di era milenial. Hasil dari penelitian ini, kita harus merujuk kepada al-Qur`an karena hal tersebut merupakan langkah preventif untuk menanggulangi pemberitaan berita hoaks, Allah mengecam bagi seseorang yang membawa berita dusta dan dalam al-Qur`an pun dijelaskan agar umat Muslim untuk selalu berkata jujur serta berdasarkan fakta, setiap umat Muslim harus bersikap tabayyun dan menelaah secara kritis terkait informasi yang muncul.

Kata Kunci: *Hukum Islam, Hoaks, Covid-19*

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of the wide spread of hoaxes in the community occurs through social media, especially in this country. According to Kominfo data, in 2021, around 800,000 sites in Indonesia will be indicated as false information. Most of the distribution is through the internet, spreading harmful content, hate speech, and opposition. However, what causes concern in the spread of this hoax is the attitude of the people who justify the information. For example, issues about hoax news are currently a somber topic, namely news related to Covid-19. The case, according to data from the Ministry of Communication and Information for the period January 23, 2020, to February 23, 2022, indicated that there were 2,125 cases of hoaxes about Cov-19,

including content issues that reached 5,573 on various social media in Indonesia, 5,375 of which have been taken down. The rest are subject to law enforcement. Boer, Pratiwi, and Muna 2020). Most hoax information about Covid-19 was found on Facebook with 2,454 content, on Twitter, there were 111 related to the Covid-19 vaccine, and on other video-based sites, such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram.

The spread of hoaxes related to Covid-19 often occurs, especially in people with low levels of human resources (Maulana, 2017). This is because when there is information in social networks or outside social networks, they directly receive the information without critical checking. Sometimes also, without thinking, they spread the information without examining its validity. Such as the origins of Covid-19, regarding medical personnel who seek benefit from patients, symptoms of being exposed to the virus, and the most sensational, namely, the abundance of hoax information related to vaccines. The targets of these issues affect not only adults; even teenagers are affected by the news (Liestyasari et al., 2020). So the fruit of this result is a stir in the community because the information is confusing, the uncertainty of a news story, and the presence of fear, provocation, and mutual suspicion (Ermawati, 2019).

This research is certainly not new because many previous studies have examined the existence of hoaxes as a problem. Ermawati and Sirojuddin, in an article entitled "Hoax News in the Perspective of the Qur'an," focuses on research on the concept of hoax in the Qur'an through a thematic research model (Ermawati, 2019). Safitri's (2021) "Hoax in the Perspective of Islamic Communication" examines hoaxes with the scope of study on Communication discourse. Another research that examines hoaxes is an article by Supriyadi Ahmad and Husnul Hotimah titled "Hoax in the study of Islamic thought and Positive Law." This research departs from the many hoax news before Indonesia's legislative and presidential elections in 2019 in the perspective of Islamic law and positive law (Ahmad & Hotimah, 2019). At the same time, this research is essential to fortify the form of spreading hoaxes related to Covid-19, which is so widespread. In analyzing the focus of the research that is studied based on the primary source of Islamic law, the Qur'an.

Departing from the description above, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth study related to the spread of hoaxes and steps for the Indonesian people to review this phenomenon, especially in Indonesia the majority of the people are Muslims. Thus, the author is interested in discussing more deeply hoaxes in a review of Islamic law, given its massive negative impact on people's lives. Thus, the formulation of the problem in this study is a review of Islamic law regarding hoaxes and their prevention efforts in the modern era with case studies on Covid-19. This study aims to find out about hoaxes from an Islamic perspective and preventative steps to avoid hoax information in the modern era, especially on issues about Covid-19.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study aims to determine the review of Islamic law related to hoax news spread on social media, especially concerning Covid-19. The type of research used is a literature study using a qualitative approach that aims to determine and search for, collect, process, and analyze research data. This study uses a descriptive-analytical method, meaning that it provides a descriptive explanation of the problems according to the research factors. Data collection techniques are divided into two types, namely primary and secondary data. In primary data, the author uses the main reference of

Islamic law to conform to what has been prescribed, namely the Qur'an. While the secondary data sources, the authors seek and examine sources that focus on the themes studied, such as books, articles, and the internet.

In the data collection technique, the author begins by looking for the theme to be studied, processing the data obtained, describing the focus of the research, then analyzing it to obtain research results that answer the problem of the review of Islamic law on hoaxes. From the explanation above, the first step in analyzing research data is to find data, collect data, filter the data to be presented or examine the data that has been studied, and the last step is to analyze the data. The technical data analysis begins with collecting and systematically classifying the data that has been obtained. Then data reduction is carried out so that the resulting data becomes more exciting and straightforward. The next step will be to present the data in a structured and described manner so that it is easy to understand, then examine and look for the meaning under study so that a conclusion can be drawn as an answer to the topic of the problem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With today's advances in technology and communication, Indonesia is categorized as an urgent condition. This condition is due to the spread of actions that are not by the norms in communication activities, either directly or through internet networks which can be referred to as social media.

This can be seen by the many harmful contents that aim to trigger a conflict between lines of people's lives, such as a statement containing provocation values, hate speech, and hoax news. Especially at this time of the Covid-19 pandemic, it creates momentum for perpetrators to commit these crimes. Especially the hot issue at this time is the emergence of hoax news about Covid-19 (Nazaruddin, 2021).

The spread of hoax news about Covid-19 issues occurs through social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and so on. This condition has misled people's minds and hurts people's social life. This is inseparable because we live in a pluralistic society, especially the Indonesian state, both in terms of knowledge and social level, which becomes chaotic and uncontrolled. As a result, the negative impact of spreading hoaxes, either directly or indirectly, can lead to a split.

The spread of this hoax will undoubtedly continue to cause various negative things, both among the public and Muslims. That way, the community, especially Muslims, should not be apathetic to the spread of hoax news that keeps passing around us. Muslims must contribute to tackling and reviewing the truth of the news by adhering to Islamic teachings according to the Qur'an and hadith. With a serious study of the problems that arise regarding the spread of the Covid-19 hoax, it is hoped that it will provide understanding to the public, especially Muslims, about the dangers of hoaxes.

Hoax Epistemology

Linguistically, the hoax is a collection of practical words joke, jest, prank, and trick, which means a joke, a lie, delinquency, ridicule, deceiving, and deceiving (Zidane et al., 2019). The word hoax itself has been around for hundreds of years. The word comes from the Greek, namely "hocus pocus," which also comes from the Latin "hoc est corpus, meaning this is the body. The word hocus was initially used by magicians to justify the truth; in fact, what they are doing is tricking people into admitting the truth

(Sahrul, 2008). The word hoax in Wikipedia is a way to trick someone about information so that they believe things that are fake or lies.

In terms, the hoax is made-up information to cover up accurate information. Hoaxes can be understood as diverting facts using information that seems to match reality, but the truth is not fulfilled (Erland & Eka, 2020). In addition, a hoax is a falsehood of information created by specific individuals for personal gain, both in and out of context, to divert or manipulate the truth (Febriansyah, 2016). From this explanation, it can be understood that a hoax is an event that is intentionally made up or false news that is spread around as if the information is accurate, even though the information is only fake news.

Then the emergence of hoax news can not be separated from several goals. In general, the spread of hoaxes aims to incite, form a dogma and perception, to lead public opinion to follow the path of understanding of the parties (Rahmadhany et al., 2021). As a result, the existence of hoax news has a very complex negative impact, such as chaos in society, causing hatred towards parties with different opinions, and intolerance between religious adherents. In addition, hoax news can lead to fights, mutual suspicion of others, and even a split (Majid, 2019).

Even though in the case of the spread of hoaxes related to Covid-19, the perpetrators were unaware of it, the information caused anxiety and fear for all people. Seeing this reality, it can be said that the perpetrators who spread the news did not review the information before disseminating it. This indicates that the media literacy level of the respective actors is very minimal, and the quality of human resources is low.

Hoax in Islamic View

According to the Qur'an, the term hoax in Islam can be identified from the translation of the word al-Ifk, which has the opposite meaning. The translation of al-Ifk into a lie or a lie is based on the meaning of lie, which twists information that is not by the facts, as the literal meaning of the word *al-ifk* (Quraish, 2002). Besides *al-ifk*, hoax also has an Arabic equivalent, *al-kadhib,* which means a lie because the word hoax is a form of deceiving information that hurts others (Munawwir, 1997).

Hoax or spreading news that is not, in reality, is an attempt to deceive information that, in the view of Islam, cannot be justified. Easy-to-obtain information is the central aspect that makes the dissemination of news without identifying the truth first. Any form of deceit or manipulation of news intended for the benefit of individuals or groups to provoke other parties by leading opinions on hot issues is an act that is prohibited and despicable in Islamic Shari'a.

The Qur'an, as a guideline for Islamic Shari'ah, has prohibited the perpetrators from making fake news, as implied in the Qur'an Surah Al-Nur: 19

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ تَشِيْعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۙ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ وَاَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ

Meaning: Indeed, those who wish this very abominable deed (false news) to be spread among the believers will have a painful punishment in this world and the hereafter. Moreover, Allah knows, while you do not know.

Hoax in Islam is a weapon for hypocrites to attack Islam, starting with the spread of hoax news related to Aisyah, who was accused of having an affair with Shafwan. The incident that befell the caliph Usman bin Affan who was killed by ghoiqi for slander, was accused of corruption, and the incident that befell Sayyidina Ali Bin Abi Talib.

As the author has described, the Qur'an will continue to be demanded by the development and progress of the times. Al-Quran must be able to answer all the problems that arise in society because the Qur'an is the main guideline for the life of Muslims. Although the word hoax is a newly emerging world, some say the word hoax began to appear in 1808. In its language, the Qur'an has already talked about hoax news and criticized the creators and spreaders.

The Qur'an has explained how we as Muslims respond to news that is not necessarily true or false or that comes from hypocrites. As stated in the Qur'an Surah Al-Hujarat: 6:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنْ جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَاٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوْٓا اَنْ تُصِيْبُوْا قَوْمًاۢ بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوْا عَلٰى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نٰدِمِيْنَ

Meaning: O you who believe! If someone wicked comes to you with news, then examine the truth so that you do not harm a people because of ignorance (recklessness), and in the end, you will regret your actions.

This verse gives instructions not to immediately receive and spread the news before it is examined by the bearer of the news, whether he is a just person and can be trusted. In addition, the purpose contained in this paragraph is to conduct research first regarding the truth. Believing a news story without being investigated, verified, and confirmed the truth is likely to bring enormous harm to humans.

Islam also teaches how human attitudes must be tabayyun when receiving the news. Tabayyun is a solution given by Islam to compare the information with other information so that it is known whether the news received is trustworthy or not. If the information is correct and valuable for dissemination, it can be shared with others. However, if the information is wrong, it is enough to stop ourselves. Islamic Shari'ah has made a scheme and the best method to filter received news before sharing the news as stated in Q.S Al-Hujarat verse 6 above (Safitri, 2021).

In addition, the Qur'an also condemns Muslims who participate in spreading hoax news. As in Q.S. al-Nur verses 14-15;

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِي مَا أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (٢٤:١٤) إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُم مَّا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِندَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ(٢٤:١٥)

Meaning: Had it not been for the grace of Allah and His mercy on you all in this world and the hereafter, a great punishment would have afflicted you because of your talk of false news (24:14). (Remember) when you receive false news by word of mouth and you, say with your mouth what you do not know a little, and you take it lightly. However, he is the sight of Allah. He is great (24:15).

In this verse, it is clear that Allah condemns those who participate in the spread of hoax news, both those who know the news and those who do not know the truth of the news. In today's context, such as someone who participates in spreading news that is not yet clear or the person spreads and continues the news without first reviewing it. For example, the author described above the issues of covid-19 related to the lockdown. Even though in the spread of the news, the person who delivered the news did not know the facts and did not understand the information, it was still recorded as behavior that Allah would punish. Because even though it is very simple or ordinary, it still makes the people around feel anxious and panicked, and the harmony is estranged due to the hoax news.

For example, there is an assumption that the government will limit the community's movement due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some even link this to the world of state politics. This condition ultimately makes people no longer believe in government policies, rebel against the government, and so on. Thus, the spread of news must know about the validity of the information and understand it before disseminating it because the impact of one's mistakes can lead to bad things.

In a narration, it is also explained that Muslims should not play with information because anyone who spreads fake news is a liar. As in the words of the Prophet Muhammad;

مَنْ حَدَّثَ عَنِّي بِحَدِيثٍ يُرَى أَنَّهُ كَذِبٌ، فَهُوَ أَحَدُ الْكَاذِبِينَ

Meaning: Whoever tells news from me that he knows that the news is a lie, then that person is one of the two liars.

The hadith emphasizes that people who lie in the name of the Prophet Muhammad are included in the group of liars. However, in the current context, the hadith can also be hinted at and used as a legal basis that anyone who tells lies or spreads slander is included in the group of liars, and there is a threat of punishment, as the verse above explains about Allah will condemn those who tell lies and spread false news.

Hoax Prevention

The existence of social media technology makes information or news spread quickly. The ease of accessing anything through social networks from YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media is the main factor that makes information a frightening specter. The reason is that it is so easy to access information from social media, ranging from children to parents who incidentally lack knowledge, so the information they receive is correct. However, in reality, it is not sure what is accepted is true.

Communication and information are one of the orders of human life that can no longer be avoided. Both are structures of life that all human beings inevitably do. In this way, all forms of positive and negative impacts on individual humans or groups cannot be avoided. It takes wisdom and maturity for each recipient of information to be further consumed personally or disseminated to the general public.

The widespread fake news or hoaxes on social media makes it difficult for the public to distinguish which information is true or false. So that it results in anomalies in the information that arise from analyzing public information and not examining the

correct sources by the facts. Thus, for every individual, the need for social media literacy includes an introduction and anticipation of hoaxes, especially for young people or students. This is because young people are specific targets for the spread of hoaxes and as a means to viral hoax news. Through this defense, young people can find out the information they receive, how to know hoax news and how to anticipate it.

False information or hoaxes that are so prevalent lately are issues related to Covid-19. Hoaxes related to the Covid-19 hoax are a small part of the false information circulating in the community. Unfortunately, the spread of this virus is also followed by the spread of false information that can mislead the public. Islam as "rahmatan lil alamin" is a mercy for the entire universe; every aspect of life cannot be separated from Islamic rules, both in terms of personal and social life. Dissemination of information can not be separated from the rules of Islam. Islam is a perfect religion where in Islam, every business and aspect of life is regulated in the Qur'an.

It is essential for humans who receive news and want to spread the news to consider the consequences and benefits of the news received. Islam provides the best offer and solution for how humans should behave when they receive and want to disseminate it according to the guidance of the Qur'an. Islam emphasizes to his servants to be careful when receiving information. Every Muslim is ordered to do *tabayyun* on the news obtained as Allah SWT has said in Surah Al-Hujarat: 6.

In Surah al-Hujarat verse 6, the verse explains the basis of social life, which is a guide for all humans, especially Muslims, when they receive news. The order of life in the process of interaction/mu'amalah must be based on clear things. This is the basis for all aspects of life, including communication patterns that produce news. This verse implies that we Muslims should filter the circulating news, lest someone step outside the corridor of truth and clarity of the Shari'a.

The Qur'an has taught Muslims to avoid hoax news by doing tabayun (checking and identifying until the truth is clear). Because if hoax news has spread everywhere, there will be other opinions that develop among the public and many negative impacts. Allah has taught morals and adab about the importance of having to ask for clarification and validation of information, especially news that has no master's source and truth. It is wrong if you do not heed these ethics, it will result in tyrannizing other parties, such as defamation, or unpleasant actions that will eventually face the law, both the Criminal and Civil Code and the Information and Technology Law.

In addition to critical thinking for *tabayyun*, one's emotional maturity seems to have an essential role in dealing with hoaxes. Those who are not emotionally mature tend to be easily ignited and easily provoked or commonly referred to as short-axis humans, namely people who are easily carried away by emotions. It is likened to the wick of dynamite; whether long or short, if it is long, it still has the choice of whether to extinguish it or let it explode. Conversely, if it is short, it does not have much time to make the right choice. Likewise, humans with short axis will quickly overflow their emotions because they do not have time to think and test the truth of their perceptions. In contrast to the long axis, they have much time to think, so there are rarely mistakes in communication or misperceptions.

Moreover, social media coverage related to Covid-19 takes place continuously, which can disturb the community's minds and psyche. Issues surrounding the virus's impact can cause people always to be presented with a sense of panic and fear of

taking action. Based on this phenomenon, the government always urges all people to be critical of various information related to Covid-19. In addition, the government also provides valid and honest information, such as accessing news related to Covid-19, by opening the link provided by the government (Aprilia, 2021).

Thus, things that are not known to be accurate, related to information and religious matters, can be asked of someone who is considered to know more and understand more about this. As explained in Q.S. Al-Nisa: 83. However, if the case is different, the expert will be different. As with information about covid-19, when we want to know the truth and authenticity of the information, the government has included all information about covid through the website.

CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, the spread of hoax news both through social networks and non-social networks is a phenomenon that is very detrimental to all circles of society. The existence of hoax content has a negative impact and has made people feel afraid, anxious, and suspicious of each other. Thus, returning to the source of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an, is a preventive measure to tackle hoax news. In the Qur'an, Allah condemns someone who brings false news. The Qur'an also urges Muslims to always speak the truth based on facts. In addition, the Qur'an also explains that every Muslim should do tabayyun and review critically in responding to news to avoid spreading hoaxes.

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