



Manifestations of Post-truth after Cancellation of Indonesia as the 2023 U20 World Cup Host

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Abstract. The research aims to see the realm of post-truth after the cancellation of Indonesia as the host of the U20 World Cup. Applying the participatory culture theory, this study used qualitative approach. It finds that that the phenomena of post-truth can be seen from the statement of Ganjar Pranowo, the Governor of Central Java Province, in refusing the participation of the Israeli National Team to play in Indonesia, which reap the pros and cons on social media, and further grow fake news. After fact checking has been carried out on some pros and cons issues, some news may be classified as fake news made by irresponsible persons. It can be concluded that Indonesian society has already entered the post truth era, characterized by the large number of people believing in the issues merely based on their own interests and alignments. At this point, fact checking efforts should be used as a basis for receiving any information.

Keywords: post-truth; fake news; fact-checking; the U20 World Cup.

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1. Introduction

Internet and social media have given birth to new habits and values which are important parts of democratic society. With the help of the internet, accessing information from any media becomes easier and faster. People do not need to wait for news of what is happening to the tomorrow's newspaper, with the internet, events that just happened a few hours ago can be seen immediately on online media Social media have also allowed audiences to become more active and interactive (Wuryanta, 2018)

However, on the other way around, the presence of social media have also led to massive information dissemination, in which the objectivity of the information could not be trusted anymore. The internet has made it possible to share fake news more frequently than verified news or information. In addition, social media has allowed the proliferation of fake accounts that further facilitating the spread of hoaxes and hate speeches. Within this media environment, the post-truth phenomenon is unavoidable as a lot of irresponsible people use social media to spread their own agendas. It is compounded by the low level of peoples' literacy, or how people are not good enough in filtering, selecting, and understanding the information they received (Suharyanto, 2019).

Post-truth became popular as it was tucked into two political momentums in 2016 where the United Kingdom left the European Union (Brexit) and the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States. It may be defined as a condition in which people receive information not based on facts, but based on one's desires and satisfaction. Post-truth may also be understood as an environment in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than those that give rise to emotions and personal beliefs (Su, 2022). Existing facts are no longer facts if they are not in accordance with the wishes and interests of the receiver, instead these facts are ignored or even rejected. The head of the Llorente and Cuenca Research Institute, Jose Antonio Llorente, said that the post-truth phenomenon is formed from beliefs and perceptions built by individuals personally which are also believed by many people, thus obscuring the actual facts. The circulating assumptions cause confusion in society which eventually forms public opinion (Suharyanto, 2019). Generally, post-truth is signified by audiences' preferences to receive information by prioritizing their personal emotions rather than waiting for facts objectively.

Post-truth phenomenon carries three symptoms namely hoaxes, social emotions and religious populism (Mofferz, 2020). In this post-truth era, decisions and arguments are made based on emotional appeal so that the facts have no effect in the eyes of society (Parani et al., 2018). Hoax is fake news containing information that is intentionally made to mislead someone and has a certain political agenda. Whereas, hate speech is an act of communication carried out by a person or group in the form of provocation, incitement, or insult to other persons or groups.

Recently, news regarding the cancellation of Indonesia as the host for the U-20 World Cup have widely circulated in social media. This event was planned to be conducted from May 20 to June 11 2023 in several major cities in Indonesia, such as Jakarta, Bogor, Bekasi, Solo, Palembang, Surabaya, Bandung, and Denpasar. However, on March 29 2023, the World Football Federation (FIFA) removed Indonesia as the host for the U-20 World Cup due to the biggest football tragedy occurred in Kanjuruhan in October 2022. Even so, many people still believe that the cancellation was caused by a wave of rejection of the presence of the Israeli Football National Team in the event. Exploring the comments and expressions on Twitter about this issue, the research aims to see the realm of post-truth after the cancellation of Indonesia as the host of the U20 World Cup.

2. Methods

This study examines contents and comments on Twitter regarding the cancellation of Indonesia as the host of the U20 World Cup. This study applies a qualitative approach, aiming to collect information about certain symptom, evidence, or data related to the topic of the research (Arikunto, 2005). It includes attempts to describe, record, analyze and interpret the conditions that are happening now.

The empirical data of this study were collected from Twitter contents and focused on the course of this issue, including a crucial period happened in March 2023 in which some public officials declared their rejection of the coming of Israeli National Team to Indonesia. This study also traces back relevant past information related to this issue, such as the information about the Host City Agreement for the 2023 U20 World Cup. In the data analysis step, this study applies a model proposed by Miles and Huberman which consists of three phases, i.e. data reduction, data display, and conclusion (Sugiyono, 2010). The empirical

findings of this study has further been discussed with a participatory culture theory as proposed by Jenkins et al. (2009).

3. Results and discussions

3.1. Case study and fact-checking

In Indonesia, the post-truth phenomenon may be illustrated by the case of Indonesia's preparations as the host of the U20 World Cup and then followed by the FIFA's decision to cancel such Indonesian position as the host. Ganjar Pranowo, the governor of Central Java Province, refused to allow the Israeli national team to play in Indonesia. A lot of people believed that this Ganjar Pranowo's statement was based on his political agenda. In this case, many people easily believed on the disinformation that the cancellation of Indonesia as the U20 World Cup host was caused by the Ganjar Pranowo's rejection to the Israeli National Team, without looking for accurate data regarding the issues.

According to FIFA, the reason behind this cancellation was the Kanjuruhan tragedy which claimed 135 victims. This is a doubt of FIFA in the safety of players playing in Indonesia. A member of the Joint Independent Fact-Finding Team (JIFFT), Akmal Marhali, confirmed this: "Seeing the results of the investigation and the facts on the ground, if it is not convincing, then the host for the World Cup will definitely be moved. If the level of security remains the same, it must be risky, how if it will happen at the World Cup." In this sense, the tweets of netizens who say that the cancellation of Indonesia as the host was caused by Ganjar Pranowo was a kind of disinformation.

In addition, according to Indonesian President Joko Widodo, the participation of the Israeli National Team in the U20 World Cup in Indonesia had nothing to do with the consistency of Indonesia's foreign policy position, "I guarantee that Israel's participation has nothing to do with the consistency of our foreign policy position towards Palestine, because our support for Palestine has always been solid and strong" (Setkab.go.id, 2023).

Our fact checking also found that several regional heads in Indonesia have signed the Host City Agreement for the 2023 U20 World Cup, meaning that they have agreed with all the requirements for organizing the event and must comply with the terms and conditions set by FIFA. In March 2021 Mayor of Surakarta Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Mayor of Surabaya Eri Cahyadi, and Governor of South Sumatra Herman Deru were the first to sign the Host City Agreement. In December 2021 the Governor of DKI Jakarta Anies Baswedan and the Governor of West Java Ridwan Kamil and finally in February 2022 the Governor of Bali I Wayan Koster signed the Host City Agreement.

Furthermore, on June 25 2022, Israel has passed the European Zone qualification and could play in the U20 World Cup in Indonesia. At that time, many groups firmly rejected the arrival of the Israeli National Team, one of which was the Medical Emergency Rescue Committee (MER-C). Although several groups had made this rejection, it has not been as massive as in 2023 when the event is approaching. I Wayan Koster sent a letter to the Minister of Youth and Sports (Menpora) on March 14 2023 containing a rejection of the Israeli National Team's participation in the U20 World Cup in Indonesia. The reason was that Indonesia does not have diplomatic relations with Israel. Afterwards, Ganjar Pranowo also stated his rejection of the participation of the Israeli National Team on March 23 2023.

Based on those fact-checking, the Governor of Bali, I Wayan Koster, seems inconsistent in making decisions, because he has signed the Host City Agreement. By rejecting the Israeli National Team, he has broken down the FIFA's principles of equality, fair play and anti-discrimination. At this point, as Ganjar Pranowo did not sign the Host City Agreement, his statement did not affect FIFA's decision to cancel the hosting of the U20 World Cup in Indonesia. This reinforced a conclusion that the rumor of the cancellation due to Ganjar Pranowo's statement was a kind of disinformation.

Furthermore, the fact-checking found that the rumor about a meeting between Ganjar Pranowo and the Israeli government delegation in Bali was a hoax. Secretary General of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI Secretariat General) Indra Iskandar denied the presence of the Israeli delegation in Bali was an official invitation from the Indonesian Government. The fact is that the Israeli Parliamentary Representative came to Indonesia as a delegation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), an international forum event in charge of interstate political negotiations.

The 144th IPU General Assembly was held in Nusa Dua, Bali, from 20 to March 24 2022 with the theme 'Getting to Zero: Mobilizing Parliament to Act on Climate Change' attended by more than 110 country representatives, including the delegation from Israel. The IPU event was managed by the DPR RI and the Chairperson of the DPR RI Puan Maharani as Chair of the General Assembly only carried out her duties to lead the course of the 144th IPU General Session. Therefore, netizens' tweet saying that Ganjar Pranowo refused to allow the Israeli National Team to play in the U20 World Cup but received the Israeli delegation was a hoax, classified as misleading content, information that is twisted to frame certain people or institutions with bad intentions.

3.2. Theoretical discussions

The findings of this study has confirmed other studies which have argued that post-truth is growing rapidly in Indonesia (Govaldi & Herlinda, 2021; Kurniawan, 2018; Parani et al., 2018; Suharyanto, 2019). Parani et al. (2018) has shown that many individuals and groups take advantage of the development of social media as a forum for spreading fake news and hate speech for their own personal or group interests. Suharyanto (2019) argued that the digital era and the development of social media have made journalistic work inferior to information spread on privately owned channels. Eventually, a polarization emerges where the idea of truth has been divided into 'my truth vs your truth'. Post-truth is filled with peddling fake news and pseudo-journalism activities that contain deliberate misinformation or deception. Regardless of who the creator of the information was, those who deal with politics-related issues generally do not hesitate to offer fake news in order to keep their interests. The development of social media has exacerbated the post-truth phenomenon from the perspectives of technology, communicators, and audiences.

In this sense we see a paradox of what called participatory culture, a culture in which people, both individually and publicly, become more active in creating, sharing and modifying popular culture through digital media. In this culture, audiences do not only act as consumers, but they can also contribute or become producers (prosumers). Audiences not only absorb or receive information, but they may also easily spread news or information.

This culture emerges along the development of internet technology, especially encourages by the interactivity nature of this technology (Jenkins et al., 2009). Increasing internet access has enhanced peoples' abilities to work collaboratively in developing and

disseminating news and creative works, and to develop collaborations with others who have the same goals and interests. Currently, the internet allows individuals to create and publish information personally. Jenkins et al. (2009) identified the characteristics of this participatory culture, i.e. low barriers to artistic expression and community involvement, high support for forming and sharing creations with others, informal guidance regarding what experiences people know which is then passed on to the beginners, participants believe that they have an important contribution, and caring participation and having good social relations with each other.

The cancellation of Indonesia as the host of the U20 World Cup obviously shown how audiences could spread the news or voice their disappointment through social media. However, in contrast to the positive tone of the participatory culture theory as suggested by Jenkins, this phenomenon shows a negative tone of the audiences' ability to participate. In this sense, to participate also possibly means to create and spread hoaxes and disinformation based on certain interests and emotional sentiments.

The Indonesian Anti-Defamation Society (Mafindo), in the January 2023 Edition of the Hoax Mapping Report, reported that there were 80 fake news on political themes on social media related to domestic and international political affairs. The hoax distribution channels were dominated by social media, such as Facebook (104 content), Twitter (33 content), Instagram (1 content), TikTok (23 content), and Youtube (53 content).

Nowadays, the pattern of news dissemination has changed, audiences eagerly want to receive news or information quickly. At the same time, internet has offered hundreds of information sources that compete with each other. Therefore, a lot of news are created with interesting titles to attract peoples' attention. When news or information are frequently spread and received by audiences, then this frequent reception will increase the public's tendency to believe on the information's truth. This makes hoaxes spread quickly and easily on social media, as exemplified in the case of the cancellation of Indonesia as the host of the U20 World Cup.

Some studies have proposed some ways to reduce hoaxes and disinformation in the post-truth era, such as improving algorithm design, sticking to traditional news reporting modes, and increasing media literacy (Aminudin, 2022). Suharyanto (2019) emphasized collaborations and synergies among all components of society to fight the post-truth tsunami through digital media literacy and fact-checking. Another point is developing high trust among communities and good cooperation with skilled individuals to achieve a common goal. This can be obtained through high quality education, especially media literacy education (Parani et al., 2018). In response to this circumstance, a civil society organization has been established, called Mafindo (Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia), an organization concerns in fighting hoaxes and promoting fact-checking. Haryatmoko argued that the opponent of the post-truth is not the truth itself, because post-truth is a denial of a truth. In this sense, the opposite of post-truth is fact-checking (Aminudin, 2022; Rianto, 2019).

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the cancellation of Indonesia as the host of the U20 World Cup indicated the post-truth phenomenon. Instead of looking for accurate information about the cancellation, netizens believed in a widely circulating news that such case was caused by Ganjar Pranowo's statement of rejecting the Israeli National Team. Actually, once an individual doing a fact-checking regarding this issue, he will easily find that the reason

behind this cancellation, according to FIFA, was the Kanjuruhan tragedy which claimed 135 victims.

In this post-truth era, people believe in facts only from personal assumptions. Facts that are in accordance with personal assumptions will be called facts. On the contrary, if these facts conflict with their interests or ideology, then these facts are ignored and even rejected as facts. From the perspective of participatory culture theory, this case points out a paradox of the participatory idea: to participate means not only engaging in collaboration for developing accurate news, creative works, or other positive actions in the spirit of democratic society, but also creating and spreading hoaxes and disinformation for certain interests and purposes.

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