SOCIAL MEDIA REGULATION IN THE POST-TRUTH ERA: ANALYSIS OF DEZINFORMATION HANDLING POLICIES IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The post-truth era is characterized by the increasing spread of information that prioritizes emotions and opinions over objective facts. Social media serves as the main channel for the distribution of this information, often without adequate supervision, increasing the risk of spreading misinformation. In Indonesia, the complexity of this challenge is increasing along with the high penetration of social media and the low level of digital literacy among the public. This article aims to analyze government policies in dealing with disinformation in the post-truth era through social media regulation. This study uses a qualitative approach with a policy analysis method, which includes a review of existing regulations such as the ITE Law, the Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Information, and other initiatives related to digital literacy. The results of the study show that existing regulations are not yet fully effective in dealing with disinformation, due to technical challenges, such as platform algorithms that tend to favor sensational content, as well as normative challenges related to freedom of expression. This study also reveals that collaboration between the government, social media platforms, and civil society is essential to creating a healthy digital ecosystem. The proposed recommendations include increasing digital literacy, strengthening regulations based on human rights, and developing technology to detect disinformation. This article contributes to the development of more effective and inclusive policies in facing the challenges of the post-truth era in Indonesia.
Keywords: Disinformation, Social Media Regulation, Post-Truth Era

Abstrak

Era pasca-kebenaran ditandai oleh meningkatnya penyebaran informasi yang lebih mengedepankan emosi dan opini ketimbang fakta yang objektif. Media sosial berfungsi sebagai saluran utama untuk distribusi informasi ini, sering kali tanpa pengawasan yang memadai, sehingga meningkatkan risiko penyebaran informasi yang salah. Di Indonesia, kompleksitas tantangan ini semakin meningkat seiring dengan tingginya penetrasi media sosial dan rendahnya tingkat literasi digital di kalangan masyarakat. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kebijakan pemerintah dalam menangani disinformasi di era pasca-kebenaran melalui regulasi media sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode analisis kebijakan, yang mencakup kajian terhadap regulasi yang ada seperti UU ITE, Peraturan Menteri Kominfo, dan inisiatif lain yang berkaitan dengan literasi digital. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa regulasi yang ada belum sepenuhnya efektif dalam mengatasi disinformasi, disebabkan oleh tantangan teknis, seperti algoritma platform yang cenderung mendukung konten sensasional, serta tantangan normatif yang berkaitan dengan kebebasan berekspresi. Penelitian ini juga mengungkapkan bahwa kolaborasi antara pemerintah, platform media sosial, dan masyarakat sipil sangat penting untuk menciptakan ekosistem digital yang sehat. Rekomendasi yang diusulkan mencakup peningkatan literasi digital, penguatan regulasi yang berbasis pada hak asasi manusia, dan pengembangan teknologi untuk mendeteksi disinformasi. Artikel ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan kebijakan yang lebih efektif dan inklusif dalam menghadapi tantangan era pasca-kebenaran di Indonesia.
Kata Kunci: Disinformasi, Regulasi Media Sosial, Era Pascakebenaran

INTRODUCTION

The term post-truth refers to a situation where objective facts no longer have a significant influence compared to individual emotions and beliefs. This phenomenon is increasingly dominating discussions in the realm of social media.[1] In Indonesia, with the high use of social media, these platforms have become the main channel for the spread of information, including false news and dezinformation. The widespread presence of social media in Indonesia contributes to the rapid spread of information, but often inaccurate. This creates its own challenges for the community, where they must be able to distinguish between valid and misleading information. In this context, digital literacy becomes very important to help individuals understand and analyze the information they receive.

In this context, the influence of social media is enormous, as these platforms allow individuals to share and consume information quickly. However, this speed often comes at the expense of accuracy and verification, allowing misinformation to spread easily. This creates an environment where personal opinions are valued more than credible evidence, which in turn affects how people understand important issues. It is imperative for all parties to improve media literacy and critical thinking skills in responding to circulating information. Collaborative efforts between the government, educational institutions, and civil society are needed to create awareness of the dangers of deinformation and the importance of verifying sources of information. In doing so, it is hoped that people can be wiser in filtering information and building views that are more fact-based.

Unfortunately, the level of digital literacy among Indonesian people is still relatively low, which worsens this situation. The inability to critically evaluate sources of information can lead to the wider spread of fake news. Therefore, efforts to improve digital literacy are needed so that people can be wiser in using social media and avoid the negative impacts of the post-truth phenomenon. Social media regulation has a crucial role in reducing the negative influence of dezinformation. However, the effectiveness of this regulation is still a topic of debate, especially due to challenges related to freedom of speech and protection of individual privacy. In this context, it is important to understand how existing policies can adapt to changing dynamics.

The increasing number of social media users in Indonesia, which will reach more than 191 million in 2023,[2] indicating the need to develop a more effective regulatory framework. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter have become major channels for the

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[1] Alya Rahmayani Siregar, Azrai Harahap, and Mahardhika Sastra Nasution, 'Etika Komunikasi Media Digital Di Era Post-Truth', *Jurnal Paradigma: Jurnal Multidisipliner Mahasiswa Pascasarjana Indonesia*, 5.1 (2024), 39–53.

[2] We Are Social Meltwater, 'Digital 2023 Report', Meltwater, 2023, 213.

dissemination of information, including unverified information.[3] This poses significant risks to social stability, national security, and public confidence in democratic institutions.

With the increasing number of social media users, the challenges faced in managing the information circulating are also increasingly complex. The spread of dezinformation through these platforms can disrupt social order and create uncertainty among the public. Therefore, it is important to formulate policies that can address this problem and protect the integrity of information conveyed to the public. In this context, strong and comprehensive regulations are needed to regulate the use of social media and prevent the spread of misleading information. This effort will not only help maintain social stability but will also strengthen public trust in democratic institutions. Thus, developing an appropriate regulatory framework is a crucial step in facing the challenges posed by the current digital era.

In an effort to address the existing challenges, the Indonesian government has implemented a number of policies, including the ratification of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) and the establishment of a Cyber Task Force by the Ministry of Communication and Information.[4] These policies aim to regulate and monitor activities in cyberspace, but their implementation often draws criticism. The criticisms that arise not only focus on the effectiveness of these policies, but also on the possibility of violations of the right to freedom of expression. Many argue that strict regulations can stifle public voices and reduce space for healthy discussions in the digital realm. Therefore, it is important for the government to evaluate and adjust existing policies in order to achieve a balance between cybersecurity and protection of freedom of expression. Constructive dialogue between the government, society, and other stakeholders is essential to creating a safe and inclusive digital environment.

A significant challenge in addressing dezinformation in Indonesia includes the breadth of information dissemination. With billions of uploads occurring every day, it is extremely difficult for authorities to effectively monitor and address all problematic content. This creates difficulties in identifying and addressing misleading information across digital platforms. There is a dilemma in finding a balance between regulation and freedom of expression. Overly stringent regulation can be seen as a violation of human rights, while weak regulation can worsen the situation by

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[3] Wardle Claire and Derakhshan Hossein, 'Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy Making / Reports / Publications / Media Freedom in Europe - Resource Center by OBCT - Resource Centre', Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy Making, 2017, 20–25.

[4] Presiden Republik Indonesia, 'Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 19 Tahun 2016 tentang Perubahan atas Undang-Undang Nomor 11 Tahun 2008 tentang Informasi dan Transaksi Elektronik', *Journal of Physics A: Mathematical and Theoretical* (Jakarta, 2016), 287 <https://doi.org/10.1088/1751-8113/44/8/085201>.

accelerating the spread of dezinformation.[5] Therefore, it is important to formulate policies that can protect the public without sacrificing freedom of speech. Another aspect that needs to be considered is the level of digital literacy in society which is still low in some groups. Low understanding of digital information makes individuals more vulnerable to manipulation and the spread of inaccurate information. Increasing digital literacy is an important step to empower the community in facing the challenges of this dezinformation.

This article aims to analyze the policies implemented in dealing with dezinformation in Indonesia. By considering various aspects involved, including social and political impacts, the author attempts to provide a clearer picture of the current situation. This is important so that we can identify the weaknesses and strengths of existing regulations. In addition, this study will also discuss steps that can be taken to improve social media regulations in facing the challenges of dezinformation. With a more comprehensive approach, it is hoped that a balanced solution can be found between protecting freedom of expression and efforts to maintain the integrity of information in the public space.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach that prioritizes policy analysis methods. The selection of this approach aims to provide researchers with the opportunity to explore in depth the mechanisms of social media regulation in dealing with the issue of dezinformation in the post-truth era, with a primary focus on the context that occurs in Indonesia. By using a qualitative approach, this study seeks to comprehensively understand how policies related to social media are formulated and implemented in order to deal with dezinformation. This is very relevant considering the challenges faced by Indonesian society in dealing with inaccurate information amidst the rapid development of information technology.[6]

This study adopts a case study approach as the research design. The selection of case studies was made because this method is able to provide a comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon, in this case the Indonesian government's policy regarding handling dezinformation on social media platforms. The main focus of this study is to analyze the regulatory aspects, implementation, and effectiveness of the policies implemented.[7] Using a case study design, this study aims to explore in depth the Indonesian government's policies in responding to the issue of rampant de-information on social media. The analysis includes a review

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[5] Direktur Jenderal Aplikasi Informatika, 'Rencana Strategis Direktorat Jenderal Aplikasi Informatika 2020 - 2024', 2021, 120.

[6] Donna M. Mertens, Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology (London: Sage Publications, 2015).

[7] Donna M. Mertens, Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology Integrating Diversity With Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods (London: Sage Publications, 2024).

of existing regulations, how the policies are implemented, and the extent to which the policies have succeeded in achieving the expected goals.[8]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dezinformation and Its Impact in the Post-Truth Era

Dezinformasi refers to information that is spread with the aim of deceiving or manipulating an audience. In Indonesia, the phenomenon of spreading fake news is often related to sensitive topics such as politics, religion, and health. For example, in the 2019 general election, hoax news was used as a tool to influence voters' views. During the COVID-19 pandemic.[9] The emergence of inaccurate information about vaccination has caused doubts among the public. This has the potential to worsen the public health situation, as uncertainty can hinder vaccination efforts needed to control the spread of the virus. The spread of this misinformation shows how important media literacy is in society.[10]

In efforts to combat dezinformation must be a priority, especially in contexts that can affect public health and well-being. Education on how to recognize and evaluate credible sources of information is essential. By increasing public awareness, it is hoped that the negative impacts of hoaxes and dezinformation that are circulating can be reduced. Dezinformation has significant consequences, one of which is increasing social polarization. This occurs when inaccurate information reinforces the views and biases of certain groups, thus triggering conflict between different groups. When individuals are trapped in information that supports their views, constructive dialogue becomes increasingly difficult, and tensions between groups can increase.

In addition, deinformation also contributes to declining public trust in government institutions and the media.[11] When people are exposed to false or misleading information, they tend to doubt the credibility of sources of information that are supposed to be reliable. This can lead to social instability, where people are skeptical of government policies and actions, as well as information conveyed by the media. The spread of false information can be a serious threat to national security. Incorrect information can trigger riots and create political instability, which in turn can disrupt public order. In this context, it is important for the public and the government to

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[8] Vicki L. Plano Clark And Nataliya V. Ivankova, Qualitative Comparative Analysis in Mixed Methods Research and Evaluation, Sustainability (Switzerland) (London and New York: Sage Publications, 2020), xi.

[9] Edson C Tandoc Jr, Zheng Wei Lim, and Richard Ling, 'DEFINING " FAKE NEWS " A Typology of Scholarly Definitions', Digital Journalism, 2017, 1–17 <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2017.1360143>.

[10] Mirna Rahmadina Gumati, 'Digital Sovereignty and State Power: Indonesia's Approach to Digital Platforms Regulation', JISPO Journal of Social and Political Sciences, 2024.

[11] I Made Ari Winangun Luh Putu Sherly Arima Devi, 'Peran Literasi Digital dalam Meningkatkan Kompetensi Teknologi Siswa Sekolah Dasar', *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Citra Bakti*, 11 (2024), 1255–67.

work together in combating disinformation, in order to maintain social stability and national security.

Dezinformation Handling Policy in Indonesia

The Indonesian government has implemented a number of policies to address the increasingly rampant problem of dezinformation. These steps were taken in response to the challenges faced in the digital era, where information can be easily disseminated and is often inaccurate.[12] In this effort, the government collaborates with various parties, including social media platforms and civil society organizations, to raise public awareness about the importance of verifying information. In addition, various educational programs have also been launched to equip the public with skills in recognizing and countering fake news. This policy not only aims to protect the public from the negative impacts of dezinformation, but also to maintain social and political stability in Indonesia.[13] With a comprehensive approach, it is hoped that the public can be more critical in filtering the information they receive and contribute to a healthier information environment.

The Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) regulated in Law Number 11 of 2008 functions as a legal framework that regulates various activities in the digital world, including in terms of the dissemination of incorrect information. In Article 28 paragraph (1), this law expressly prohibits the dissemination of information that can be misleading and potentially detrimental to the public. This shows the government's efforts to protect the public from the negative impacts of inaccurate information.[14]

However, the ITE Law is often the subject of criticism because it is considered to have many interpretations that can be misused. Some parties argue that the provisions in this law can be used to limit freedom of expression, thus causing concern among the public. The ambiguity in several articles can lead to inconsistent law enforcement and potentially cause injustice. It is important to evaluate and revise the ITE Law so that it can be clearer in regulating the dissemination of information in cyberspace without sacrificing individual rights. Fair and transparent law enforcement is needed to ensure that this law is not misused. Thus, it is hoped that the ITE Law can function effectively in protecting the public while maintaining freedom of expression.

The Ministry of Communication and Digital is responsible for monitoring and controlling the spread of information in cyberspace, including blocking websites or social media accounts

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[12] Abd Hannan, 'Propaganda Politik Pascakebenaran (Post-Truth) Menjelang Pemilu 2024 dan Ancamannya Terhadap Demokrasi', *POLITEA: Jurnal Kajian Politik Islam*, 6.1 (2022), 50–82.

[13] Hanna.

[14] Indonesia, 'Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 19 Tahun 2016 tentang Perubahan atas Undang-Undang Nomor 11 Tahun 2008 tentang Informasi dan Transaksi Elektronik'.

involved in spreading fake news. In carrying out this task, Kodigi not only acts independently, but also collaborates with various social media platforms to remove content that is considered problematic. The steps taken by Komdigi in combating hoaxes are further strengthened by the development of technology, one of which is the AIS (Automatic Identification System) machine. This technology is designed to automatically detect and identify negative content circulating on the internet, allowing for faster and more efficient action in dealing with issues related to misleading information. Through efforts to monitor and remove inappropriate content, Komdigi seeks to create a safer and more trusted digital environment. With the collaboration between the government and social media platforms, it is hoped that it can reduce the negative impact of the spread of hoaxes and increase public awareness of the importance of verifying information before sharing it.[15]

Digital literacy is a major focus in the efforts of the government and various non-governmental organizations to improve public understanding of the issue of dezinformation. Through structured campaigns, they seek to provide deeper knowledge on how to recognize and counter inaccurate information. One prominent initiative is the National Digital Literacy Movement Siberkreasi, which is designed to form a society that is more critical and selective in consuming information circulating on social media.

These digital literacy programs not only aim to raise awareness, but also to equip people with the skills needed to face information challenges in the digital era.[16] With an interactive and educational approach, it is hoped that the public can better understand how social media works and its impact on public perception. This is important so that individuals can participate actively and responsibly in discussions related to social and political issues. The collaboration between the government and non-governmental organizations in this digital literacy campaign shows a shared commitment to creating a healthier information environment. By building collective awareness of the importance of verifying information, it is hoped that the public can reduce the spread of fake news and improve the quality of public discourse. This effort is a strategic step in building information resilience amidst the rapid flow of information that is often misleading.

The collaboration between the Indonesian government and leading technology companies such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google aims to address the problem of fake content circulating in cyberspace. Through this collaboration, it is hoped that better identification of inaccurate information and the removal of content that is detrimental to the community can be carried out.

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[15] OECD, 'Disinformation and Misinformation', Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2024.
[16] Cherilyn Ireton and Julie Posetti, JOURNALISM , ' FAKE NEWS ' & Handbook for Journalism Education and Training (FRANCE: UNESCO Culture of Peace Programme, 2018).

This initiative reflects the government's commitment to creating a safer and more trustworthy digital environment.

In addition, these platforms are expected to increase transparency in the algorithms they use. By providing a clearer understanding of how the algorithm works, users can better understand how information is presented to them. This is important to build public trust in digital platforms and reduce the potential for the spread of misleading information.[17] The government also encourages platform providers to provide more effective reporting mechanisms for users. With a clear channel to report content that is considered false or dangerous, it is hoped that the public can play an active role in maintaining the quality of information circulating. This step is expected to strengthen collaboration between the government, technology companies, and the public in combating disinformation.

Policy Effectiveness Analysis

Efforts to block sites and accounts involved in the spread of false information have succeeded in reducing the level of public access to fake news. This action shows a commitment to creating a healthier and more trustworthy information environment. The widely implemented digital literacy campaign has contributed significantly to increasing public understanding of the risks posed by dezinformation.[18] Through these programs, individuals are expected to be more critical in filtering the information they receive. With increasing awareness of the dangers of hoaxes, people are expected to be wiser in using social media and other sources of information. This is important to build a more informative society and be able to face the challenges of information in today's digital era.

The downside of a reactive approach to policy is that actions are often taken only after the de-information problem has spread widely. This suggests that the response is not preventive in nature, but rather more about dealing with the impact that has already occurred, so its effectiveness in preventing the spread of misinformation is very limited. Although technologies such as AIS (Artificial Intelligence System) can provide assistance in monitoring content, the challenge faced is the very large volume of information on social media.[19] The capacity to monitor and respond to all circulating content is very limited, so that much information goes undetected and can potentially cause confusion among the public. On the other hand, there is also

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[17] Setiawati Lathifah Sandra Devi, 'Kajian Implementasi Undang-Undang ITE Dalam Menangkal Hate Speech (Cyberbullying) Di Kalangan Generasi Z', *MULTIPLE Journal of Global and Multidisciplinary*, 2.8 (2024), 2728–39.

[18] Agus Wibowo, M Kom, and M Si, *Hukum Di Era Globalisasi Digital* (Semarang: Universitas Sains & Teknologi Komputer (Universitas STEKOM), 2023).

[19] Muhammad Irfan Pratama and Abdul Rahman, 'Kebebasan Berpendapat Dan Berekspresi Di Media Sosial Dalam Perspektif Hak Asasi Manusia', *Qawanin Jurnal Ilmu Hukum*, 3.1 (2022), 1–16.

the risk of misuse of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE), where articles that have many interpretations can be used to criminalize criticism of the government. In addition, the lack of clear regulations on social media platforms adds to the complexity of the problem, as reliance on internal policies that are often not transparent can result in injustice in law enforcement.

Policy Recommendations

Reform of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE)[20] it is necessary to clarify articles that have many interpretations, so as to reduce the potential for possible misuse. With this clarification, it is hoped that there will be better legal certainty for the community, as well as avoiding interpretations that are detrimental to certain individuals or groups. In addition, it is very important to include specific provisions that directly target the spread of misleading information or dezinformation.[21] These provisions must be formulated carefully so as not to sacrifice the rights to freedom of expression guaranteed by the constitution. Thus, efforts to protect the public from misinformation can be carried out without inhibiting legitimate voices and opinions. Through this reform, it is hoped that the ITE Law can function more effectively in facing challenges in the digital era, where information can be easily disseminated. Fair and transparent law enforcement will be key in maintaining a balance between protecting the public and respecting freedom of expression.

Increasing collaboration between governments, technology providers, and civil society elements is essential in the fight against de-information. This collaboration can create more effective synergies in identifying and handling misleading information, thereby protecting the public from the negative impacts caused by fake news. It is important to encourage openness in the algorithms used by social media platforms. With this transparency, users can better understand how content is distributed and organized, which in turn can reduce the risk of spreading inaccurate or harmful information. Through these steps, it is hoped that a safer and more informative digital environment will be created. Strong collaboration and transparency in information management will help build public trust in existing information sources, as well as raise awareness of the importance of verifying information before spreading it.

Improving digital literacy is an important step in modern education, which can be achieved by integrating aspects of digital literacy into the formal education curriculum. This aims to equip students with the skills needed to understand and use information technology effectively. Thus, students are not only consumers of information, but are also able to analyze and evaluate

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[20] Presiden Republik Indonesia, 'Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 11 Tahun 2008 tentang Informasi dan Transaksi Elektronik' (Indonesia, 2008).
[21] Wibowo, Kom, and Si.

the content they encounter in cyberspace.[22] It is necessary to provide more intensive training for journalists and content creators. This training should focus on information verification techniques before publication, so as to reduce the spread of fake news and misleading information. By improving their ability to verify sources and content, it is hoped that journalists and content creators can contribute to improving the quality of information circulating in the community.[23] This effort will not only strengthen the individual's ability to face the challenges of information in the digital era, but will also create a more critical and informed society. With good digital literacy, individuals will be better able to participate in public discussions and make better decisions based on accurate information. Therefore, the integration of digital literacy in education and professional training is crucial to building the foundation of a society that is intelligent and responsive to the development of information technology.

A proactive approach is essential in addressing the challenges of deinformation. One step that can be taken is to develop technology that can detect early trends related to the spread of inaccurate information.[24] With this technology, it is expected to identify and counter hoaxes before they spread more widely in society. It is important to encourage in-depth research on the patterns of hoax distribution in Indonesia. This research can provide better insight into how false information circulates and influences public opinion. By understanding these patterns, more effective strategies can be designed to educate the public and improve media literacy. These efforts will not only help reduce the negative impacts of dezinformation, but will also strengthen the community's resilience to misleading information. With collaboration between technology, research, and education, it is hoped that Indonesia can create a healthier and more sustainable information environment.

Policies governing digital platforms need to be implemented to ensure that social media are responsible for the content they distribute. This responsibility includes stricter monitoring of information circulating on the platform, so as to prevent the spread of misleading information. In addition, it is very important to set strict sanctions for platforms that are unable to quickly remove dezinformation content. These sanctions are expected to encourage platforms to be more proactive in managing and filtering content that has the potential to harm the public. With clear regulations and effective sanctions, it is hoped that digital platforms can play a better role in maintaining the quality of information disseminated to the public. This will contribute to increasing digital literacy and public trust in information obtained through social media.

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[22] Adianto Agung Sulistyo, Tri Eko Yudiandri , Hani Ernawati, 'Literasi Digital Pelaku UMKM dalam Upaya Menciptakan Bisnis Berkelanjutan', *Jurnal Komunikasi Pemberdayaan*, 1.2 (2022), 87–103.
[23] Director General of Informatics Applications.
[24] Luh Putu Sherly Arima Devi.

CONCLUSION

In the midst of the post-truth era, the challenges faced by Indonesia regarding dezinformation are increasingly pressing, potentially disrupting social and political stability. Although the policies that have been implemented show some progress, there is still an urgent need to make improvements and adjustments in order to face the ever-evolving challenges. By integrating more effective regulations, strengthening collaboration between parties, and increasing digital literacy among the community, Indonesia has the opportunity to reduce the negative impacts of dezinformation and create a healthier digital ecosystem.

Social media plays a major role in the dissemination of information, including disinformation that can affect public perception and social stability. The Indonesian government has taken steps through various regulations, such as the ITE Law and the Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Information, as well as establishing cooperation with social media platforms. However, the implementation of these regulations still faces a number of challenges, such as the incompatibility between law and technology, low digital literacy among the public, and potential violations of freedom of expression. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach is needed, including increasing critical public awareness, strengthening cooperation between the government and civil society, and adjusting regulations that are responsive to technological developments, without ignoring human rights.

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