

# Increasing Awareness and Knowledge of Hoax News in Sakatiga Village: A Response to Globalization's Information Challenges

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## Increasing Awareness and Knowledge of Hoax News in Sakatiga Village: A Response to Globalization's Information Challenges

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**Abstract:** In the current era of globalization, information dissemination occurs rapidly through various mass media intermediaries. This presents new challenges, particularly for individuals residing in rural areas who may lack the necessary understanding to harness today's technological advances. One pressing issue is the widespread circulation of hoax news, primarily through social media platforms. This service initiative aims to enhance awareness and knowledge regarding hoax news in Sakatiga Village, Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency. The implementation strategy revolves around a comprehensive socialization approach designed to raise public awareness, enhance comprehension, and empower residents with the skills to differentiate between hoax and genuine news. Additionally, it provides insights into relevant laws and outlines the necessary steps to take in the event of encountering hoax news.

**Keywords:** Knowledge; Awareness; Hoax News

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's digitalization era, significant advancements have unfolded, with a particular focus on communication and information technology. These advancements have led to a surge in the accessibility of information, primarily through social media channels. According to research from 'The Latest Insight into The State of Digital,' 274.9 million Indonesians are connected to the digital world, with 170 million actively using social media platforms. Social media has emerged as a potent, transparent, and efficient communication medium, playing a pivotal role as a catalyst for change and innovation. It serves as a bridge guiding the transition from traditional to modern society. As Hjorth & Hinton (2019) state, social media serves as an online platform where individuals connect, share content, news, photos, and more (Rahadi, 2017).

One prevailing phenomenon in the digital age is the proliferation of hoax (fake) news circulating on social media platforms. Besides information dissemination, social media serves a strategic role in facilitating communication among citizens and between the public and the government, enabling the expression of criticism and aspirations. The evolution of technology has empowered the public through various social media services like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, blogspot, wordpress, friendster, and more. Consequently, the shift from conventional to digital media has

gained momentum. This shift brings numerous benefits, such as rapid access to information and the swift dissemination of events, stories, and news among the public.

The rapid development of information and communication technology has both positive and negative impacts on society. Social media can be harnessed for positive endeavors, including fostering connections, facilitating trade, and accessing diverse information. However, it is imperative to instill ethical behavior in all segments of society regarding the use of social media. Many social media users employ these platforms for detrimental purposes, posing potential harm to both the government and the community itself (Nugraha, 2019).

Social media is a platform frequently exploited by interest groups to propagate hoaxes—deliberately fabricated information designed to obscure the truth. In essence, hoaxes manipulate facts with convincingly presented but unverifiable data. These can encompass various forms, such as news, misinformation, fake news, or outright lies (Nugraha, 2019). The consequences of hoaxes extend beyond material losses, often inciting unrest, paranoia, and fear in targeted individuals or communities. According to Rahadi (2017), hoaxes represent information that diverges from facts and necessitates critical examination.

Concurring with this perspective, Nugraha (2019) defines hoaxes as false news intended to vilify specific individuals or groups. Hoax news serves as a tool for individuals or groups to deceive or manipulate the beliefs of readers or listeners. Its objectives include shaping public opinion, influencing perceptions, and, at times, simply amusing or testing the discernment of Internet and social media users (Nugraha, 2019). The motivations for spreading hoaxes vary, ranging from jest and undermining competitors (black campaigns) to promotion and fraudulent activities (Nugraha, 2019). Importantly, disseminating hoax news through social media or any other means can lead to legal consequences, as outlined in Regulation and Law No. 19 of 2016 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE).

In Indonesia, alongside the cases, the country grapples with a 'news crisis' characterized by the widespread and systematic propagation of hoaxes across all social strata, from urban centers to rural villages, and across generations (Palupi, 2020). Hoaxes transcend being solely a social problem; they represent a collective lesson on the importance of clear thinking, cautious action, discerning information consumption, and fostering a society that thrives on mutual benefit and adherence to established rules.

Given this context, there is an urgent need to educate individuals on detecting hoax news early on, building a robust foundation to navigate the era of information globalization. As noted by Siswoko (2017), the emergence of hoax news underscores the importance of character education and literacy in curtailing their proliferation within society. Education, characterized as a dynamic process of behavioral change, extends beyond the transmission of theories and procedures—it cultivates internal awareness within individuals, groups, and communities (Palupi, 2020; Septanto, 2018).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Hoax News

Hoax news is misinformation to deceive or trick readers into believing something, colloquially known as fake news. Alex Davis argues that when and where the term hoax came from is not very clear. The Oxford English Dictionary estimates that the term hoax comes from the word "hocus". The definition of hoaxes first appeared in a reference written in 1976 entitled "To deceive by an amusing or mischievous fabrication or fiction, to play up the credulity of Hoax", which is a verb and means to deceive through an alluring and mischievous fabrication or fiction or to play on trust (Gunawan & Ratmono, 2021). From the understanding of hoaxes above, it can be concluded that a hoax is misleading information that is deliberately engineered by someone with the aim of deceiving.

In the digital world, which is often found through news from the internet, there are many types and motives behind the spread of hoaxes. On the other hand, the existence of the internet by entering various accounts provided for its users (Palupi, 2020). The existence of a digital world which

has spread throughout the world, makes it easy for people to communicate and get global information. Using social media also has positive and negative impacts that will be felt by its users and everyone must be smart in using existing accounts and sources on the internet. The characteristics of hoax news include (1) the news presented is false or fake; (2) the event is exaggerated or certain parts are omitted; (3) the writing or text does not match the picture; (4) the title does not match the news content; (5) reloading old events and making them as if they were actual events with the aim of supporting the issues that are being discussed; and (6) deliberately loading photos of other events that are changed in such a way as to support the issues that are being discussed. Types of Hoax information:

- 1) Fake News that tries to replace the original news. This news aims to falsify or insert untruths into a news story. Fake news writers usually add things that are not true and conspiracy theories.
- 2) Clickbait or booby-trapped links are strategically placed on a site with the aim of attracting people to other sites. The content in these links is factual but the title is exaggerated, or a catchy image is placed to lure readers.
- 3) Satire A piece of writing that uses humor, irony, and exaggeration to comment on current events.
- 4) Post-truth where emotions play a role rather than facts with the aim of shaping public opinion.

## 2.2. Perception of the Law for Spreading Hoax News

According to Kali (2012), the legal regulation of the criminal act of spreading false news (hoax) in Indonesia is regulated in the Criminal Code (KUHP), Law Number 1 of 1946 concerning Criminal Law Regulations, and Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19 of 2016 concerning Amendments to Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions (hereinafter abbreviated as ITE Law).

Sitompul (2012) explains that the development of information and communication technology has significant implications for the regulation or formation of regulations in cyberspace and cyber law as well as for the development of crime in cyberspace commonly called cybercrime. One of the negative impacts that often occurs with the ease of communication and exchanging information through online media between fellow internet users is information or news that is disseminated individually or in groups that cannot be justified or identified as hoaxes.

Widodo et al. (2020) explained that the sanctions in Article 45 Paragraph 2 of Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions against the perpetrators of spreading false news (hoaxes) have been applied correctly. This indicates that the criminalization of the perpetrators of spreading fake news or hoaxes is not only imposed on the perpetrators who write or post the first time a piece of fake news but also on people who are just idly distributing (forwarding) / sharing. Furthermore, the motivation of the perpetrators of spreading fake news (hoaxes) from the results of our research is that the speed of information, lack of attention in digesting information, and the ability to digest information can be a factor in accelerating the spread of fake news. So, it can be said that cognitive and emotional abilities are the main factors. Economic factors and political interests play a role in motivating fake news website owners to create fake news.

In Law Regulation Number 19 of 2016, article 45A paragraph 1, which states: (1) Every person who intentionally and without right spreads false and misleading news resulting in consumer harm in Electronic Transactions as referred to in Article 28 paragraph (1) shall be punished with a maximum imprisonment of 6 (six) years and a maximum fine of Rp1,000,000,000.00 (one billion rupiah). In this regard, the birth of the Law is an activist in using social media, should have tricks or smart ways, so that social media is used properly and does not violate applicable legal rules. We must realize that Indonesia is one of the largest internet and social media user countries in the world so the application of ethics/legal compliance in society is needed in order to avoid crime in cyberspace. Therefore, law enforcement officials and the enforcement of laws and regulations must immediately tackle crimes in social media seriously.

### 3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Our approach to implementing this initiative revolves around socialization methods. The service is designed to encompass counseling sessions, lectures, and interactive question-and-answer discussions addressing the proliferation of hoax news. The overarching goal of this program is to augment awareness and knowledge pertaining to hoax news within the Sakatiga Village community, located in the Indralaya District of Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra Province. It is worth noting that Sakatiga Village enjoys a special partnership with Sriwijaya University.

The community service activities spanned a duration of three days, commencing on September 19th and concluding on September 21st, 2022. A total of 30 participants engaged in these sessions, comprising the village head, village officials, community leaders, and residents from Sakatiga Village, Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra Province. Facilitating these sessions was a distinguished lecturer from Sriwijaya University's Faculty of Law, well-versed in both legal matters and societal dynamics.

To assess the effectiveness of our efforts, we conducted an evaluation using questionnaires distributed to participants. These evaluations sought to gauge participants' comprehension of the materials presented, identify areas for improvement, and capture their expectations for future activities. The insights garnered from these evaluations will serve as valuable references for enhancing similar initiatives in the future.

### 4. RESULTS

#### 4.1. Content Provided by the Speaker

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The development of information and communication technology has led to borderless world relations and caused significant social, economic, and cultural changes to take place rapidly. The Oxford Dictionary defines what is called a humorous or malicious deception. Meanwhile, hoaxes according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary are defined as false information. The term hoax is not recognized in Indonesian legislation but there are several regulations governing hoaxes or fake news.



Figure 1. Content Provided by the Speaker

The telecommunications law, which regulates consumer organizers of telecommunications networks and services, and the rapid development of electronic communication technology in the form of the Internet have led to a form of cybercrime as the basis for the emergence of Law No. 11/2008 on information and electronic transactions. The character of internet technology, which allows anyone to access information globally anytime and anywhere, allows crimes to occur. These crimes, such as cybercrime, are accessed anonymously (using fake accounts) to commit

insults/exploitation. The impact is that information is massively spread and gives rise to wild speculation that causes victims or injured parties.



Figure 2. Participants Listen to the Speaker's Presentation

Several laws regulate hoax crimes, including the Criminal Code/KUHP, Law Number 11 of 2008 on electronic information and transactions, Law Number 40 of 2008 on the elimination of racial and ethnic discrimination, and legislation addressing hate speech leading to social conflict. Additionally, the Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Information Technology No. 19 of 2014 deals with the handling of negatively charged websites, along with other relevant statutes.

The criminal liability of individuals who spread hoaxes arises from two key factors. Firstly, false news often inflicts harm upon a subject or object. Secondly, such actions contravene, Article 28 paragraph 2 of the Law No. 11 of 2008, which states: "Any person who intentionally disseminates information intended to incite hatred or hostility towards individuals and/or specific groups based on ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (SARA) without legal justification.

Fake news disseminated through electronic media (social media) that is not intended to mislead consumers, can be punished under the ITE Law depending on the content disseminated such as 1) If the fake news contains decency, it can be charged under Pasal 27 Ayat 1 UU ITE; 2) If it contains gambling, it can be punished based on Pasal 27 Ayat 2 UU ITE; 3) If it contains insults and/or defamation, it can be punished based on Pasal 27 Ayat 3 UU ITE; 4) If it contains extortion and/or threats, it is punishable under Pasal 27 Ayat 4 UU ITE; 5) If the content creates a sense of hatred based on SARA, it will be punished based on Pasal 28 Ayat 2 UU ITE; 6) If it contains threats of violence or fear directed personally, it is punishable under Pasal 29 UU ITE.



Figure 3. Group Photo

#### 4.2. Feedback

This feedback is an important part of the service activity whose purpose is to find out the extent of the participants' understanding and knowledge of hoax news. Feedback is intended to see how successful the service that has been provided by the presenter consists of the delivery of material and answers to participants' questions.



**Figure 4.** Filling out the Feedback Questionnaire

In this feedback session, each participant was encouraged to share their impressions, messages, as well as any criticisms and suggestions directly related to the training. The aim was to promote a culture of openness and encourage participants to express their thoughts freely. Most participants provided positive feedback, as evidenced by several comments highlighting the usefulness of the training materials.

**Table 1.** Evaluation of the Importance of Service Activities

Importance of Service Activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Important	28	93,33
Important	2	6,67
Fair	-	-
Not Important	-	-
Very Unimportant	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Source: Field data (processed), 2022

Based on the results of the feedback questionnaire given to the service participants, it is known that the service regarding increasing the vigilance and knowledge of rural communities against hoax news was 93.33 percent of respondents stated that it was very important, then 6.67 percent of other participants stated that it was important. It can be concluded that this service activity is very important to do.

**Table 2.** Participants' Level of Understanding and Knowledge of Hoax News

Participants' Level of Understanding	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very well understood	30	100,00
Understand	-	-
Fair	-	-
Not Understood	-	-
Very Not Understood	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Source: Field data (processed), 2022

Before this service activity, the community in Sakatiga Village did not know about how to distinguish hoax news and true news, the law, and steps to take if there is hoax news. Based on the results of participant feedback, 100 percent of the community really understood the material provided by the resource person. This service activity provides the benefits of increasing community knowledge and awareness of hoax news that spreads in the community.

**Table 3.** Evaluation of Community Service on the Appropriateness of Community Needs

Appropriateness of Community Needs	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Suitable	30	100,00
Suitable	-	-
Fair	-	-
Not Suitable	-	-
Very Not Suitable	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Source: Field data (processed), 2022

Based on the results of the feedback questionnaire, all participants stated that this service activity was very much in line with community needs. The existence of digitalization and globalization makes information development faster. People can use smartphones to access information globally on social media and the internet. The low knowledge of the community in the village towards knowledge and technological developments has a negative impact, namely the ease with which people receive hoax news and spread hoax news. Hoax news can cause unrest, paranoia, and fear of certain objects even though this sometimes does not cause direct material losses. Therefore, this service activity provides benefits to the community in the form of education about hoax news.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This community service activity on increasing awareness and knowledge of village communities about hoax news is very important and beneficial for the community in Sakatiga Village. After this service activity, the community really understands how to distinguish hoax news and true news, the law, and the steps that must be taken if there is hoax news as seen from the results of participant feedback. The era of digitalization cannot be avoided, but the community can be educated about the positive and negative impacts of digitalization, especially the spread of hoax news. Of course, this activity does not only involve the government, academics, and the community but other stakeholders are needed who can educate the public in a sustainable manner.

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participated in the successful implementation of this activity, so that it can run well and provide benefits to the people of Sakatiga Village, Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency.

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