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SOCIAL EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA REVEALED IN *THE SOCIAL DILEMMA* DOCUMENTARY MOVIE: POST-TRUTH PERSPECTIVE

Iddianto¹, Rahmawati Azi²

^{1,2} English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Halu Oleo University,
Kendari, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: email: antokendari18@gmail.com,

Abstract

Social media has been a platform to create any social effect in the society. Social media is not only utilized to spread the useful information, but also misinformation, like; fake news, rumor bombs, and lying intentionally. *The Social Dilemma* is one of the movie that revealed social effect of social media, such as; Twitter, Facebook, Tik-Tok, Youtube, and Instagram. These platforms become center of spreading of misinformation, particularly in the midst of pandemic Covid-19 by manipulating real fact and public opinion. This study tried to scrutinize the spreading of misinformation revealed in *The Social Dilemma* movie through Post-Truth perspective. Post-Truth believed that the use of social media to disseminate misinformation is related to social, political, and economic interests. People no longer respect the truth but accept it based on what they feel and believe, and social media has become useful tool to fulfill this function. This study attested that misinformation spread by several social media users and politicians caused social effects such as chaos in the midst of a pandemic, destruction of 5G network towers, to the formation of new truths based on misinformation about Covid-19 as a hoax, and the formation of public opinion regarding the Democratic party as the spreader of the Covid-19 virus in the US.

Keywords: Documentary Movie, Post-Truth, Postmodernism, Social Effect, Media Media

INTRODUCTION

Movie is an entertainment platform that many people currently favor. Movie is a live image presented with a script or without a script to give a message to the audience. Makarim (2009) explained that the movie is a means of mass communication, in addition to radio and telecommunications networks. Movies carry on messages to be conveyed to the audience. Susanto (1982) points out that movie are a mix of endeavors to pass on messages through moving pictures, camera innovation,

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shading, and sound. The components are out of sight by a story that contains a message that needs to be conveyed by the chief to the movie crowd.

With the rapid development of digital world, movies have developed along with technological development. Technological development can have new effects in movie making, starting from the development of cinematography to the genre of movies that are included in the movie. The type of movie genres began to be developed by movie producers to attract the audience; several types of movie genres today are horror, drama, comedy, adventure, action, animation, family, and documentary genres. With the many genres of films that have been developed, they can get the audience's attention.

The movie genre that has started to appear on television is the documentary genre. Ayawaila (2008: 11) stated that documentary movies are motion pictures that documenting or presenting reality. It means that what is recorded is indeed based on existing facts, but human thoughts can be included in its presentation. Documentary movies usually discuss an event in real life with a few illustrations of the actual event. The documentary movie producer invited several experts or people who were directly involved in the actual event.

The Social Dilemma is a documentary movie produced by Jeff Orlowski. It is released on September 9, 2020, and airs on Netflix. This movie invites former Information Technology experts on social media such as Tristan Harris, Jaron Lanier, and Tim Kendall to share opinions dealing with social media contents. This movie tells how social media has changing its trajectory in spreading misinformation that has impacts on society. The situation described in this movie has something to do with the current state of life. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, information dissemination on social media is exploding. Misinformation about Covid-19 is widely disseminated on social media, so politicians use the Covid-19 issues to bring down political opponents without considering the societal consequences. This movie also shows how politicians use social media to spread misinformation to win elections.

The issues highlighted in the *The Social Dilemma* movie about social media and its impact on society. The movie illustrates the significance of social media in spreading disinformation nowadays. This urgency may be observed in the number of social media users who are trapped by misinformation created and disseminated by a number of social media users and politicians. Misinformation that is extensively disseminated on social media has the potential to distort the opinions of many social media users, resulting in the creation of new truths based on the misinformation that is disseminated. The presence of new facts that are produced based on disinformation has a social consequence in society.

Looking at how the facts produced in the social media as revealed in the movie, it is linking with post truth mechanism. Post-truth is a social and political condition where people no longer respect the truth but accepts it based on what they feel and believe (Harsin, 2015). Post-truth is a breakdown of social trust, which includes what was formerly the major institutional truth-teller or publicist the news media. What is accepted as popular truth is sometimes unscientific, opinion based on trust in those who should know. Harsin (2015) argued that the mechanism for the formation of post-truth is formed of three kind of misinformation spread on social media, there are fake news, rumor bombs, and lying. These three types of misinformation have become massively effect the society and disseminate a false information on social media. Moreover, in the pandemic Covid-19 era, misinformation massively distributed to the society through social media and accepted as a truth by a particular segment of society. Thus, this study focus the discussion on social effect of social media revealed in *The Social Media* movie.

This study is a library study with applying descriptive qualitative method and approaching the data through post truth perspective. The main aspect that investigated is misinformation and disinformation that covers fake news, rumors bombs, and lying as well as the construction of a new truth based on misinformation and disinformation.

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MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

Misinformation is the dissemination of false information while mistakenly believing that one is transmitting accurate information (actually, the individual or association spreading it is misled). On the other hand, disinformation is seen as deliberately spreading false or inaccurate information (Stahl, 2010).

Misinformation and disinformation are related. One can propagate a fake explanation that one thought to be legitimate, which was first provided to misguide; disinformers might deliver misinformers. Misleading compares in incorrectness, a false claim, but not a misrepresentation, in terms of morals, goal, and impact. If the victim of deception trusts it, accepts it as truth or genuine, the individual is deceived but not held accountable for critical misinformation closures. Disinformation, however, is similar to deception in that both are exploitative.

The movie revealed that there are numerous misinformation and disinformation carried out by the social media goers in the middle of the Covid-19 epidemic. This pandemic sparked much anxiety and much information about the virus's lethal nature, as well as knowledge about the pandemic's false information widely disseminated. Of course, this instills dread in the population, and few individuals who have been exposed to false information about the virus feel at ease. There are three sub-categories of misinformation and deception that suggest post-truth: Fake News, Rumor Bombs, and Lying. These three categories are covered in the *The Social Dilemma* movie, which the writer addresses with the Covid-19 and Political Issues instances that the writer will describe.

Fake News

Fake News is an American term that first appeared in 1992 about video news broadcasts, news segments delivered through an open link at the time broadcast on TV as substance writers had produced via revealing strategies. It appears to have had no regular public use before 1999, so, all things considered, it became related to self-distinguished parody news shows (Harsin, 2018)

Fake news, often known as hoaxes, is untrue information that is presented as factual. Fake news is intended to make people feel frightened, uncomfortable, and bewildered. When people get confused, they make terrible, unconvincing, and even erroneous decisions. Fake news is a collection of intentionally false information that is "sold" as truth. Fake news is not only misleading, but it also comprises content that lacks solid proof yet is presented as if it were a series of facts.

There are numerous data of misleading news regarding Covid-19 spreading on social media in the documentary movie *The Social Dilemma*, like; Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube. Fake news about illicit medicines that can cure Covid-19 and radiation of 5G network towers spreads the Covid-19 infection over social media, leading to misinformation and widespread public anxiety.

Picture 1. Fake news about cocaine can kill covid-19
(The Social Dilemma,1:03:38-1:03:41)



The picture above depicts fake news that propagated on Twitter regarding one of the illicit substances, cocaine, to eradicate the Covid-19 virus. When the epidemic began to spread throughout the world, this information was extensively disseminated on social media. This news was purposefully created so that many social media users would read it to learn the truth, to generate a large number of clicks on the news, since the more clicks or readers on a piece of information that is shared, the more interaction they will have. Thus they will reap numerous benefits from the fake news they create.

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One of the Twitter accounts that spread fake news about cocaine is the account of Bizzle Osikoya (@bizzleosikoya). Bizzle Oikoya is a Nigerian Artists and repertoire (A&R) expert, talent developer, music and diversion specialist, and advanced advertiser. His Twitter account has a blue tick which means he has many followers on his Twitter account. The picture above shows a Twitter account uploading news about cocaine can kill covid-19 on February 3, 2020.

According to the news about cocaine spreading, the news creator attempts to persuade many people that cocaine has been shown to research cocaine that can eliminate the covid-19 virus. It can be observed that this newsmaker created a news title that reads, "Scientists find how drugs can remove viruses," which might instill faith in readers because the "scientist" sentence implies that professionals have conducted a study on cocaine. This phrase prompted many others who were unaware of the situation to believe it and inform the public.

Cocaine fake news is widely circulated on social media because nearly everyone utilizes it in their everyday lives. The worst-case scenario is that some regular social media users trust the propagation of fake news. To prepare for this, numerous fact-checking websites and social media platforms debate false news. Indeed, according to the National Institute of Health, cocaine is a highly addictive substance; therefore, using it as an antidote to the Covid-19 virus will only exacerbate the problem for Covid-19 sufferers. Patients will acquire Parkinson's disease even if they are already heavily addicted to drugs and have overdosed.

Rumor Bombs

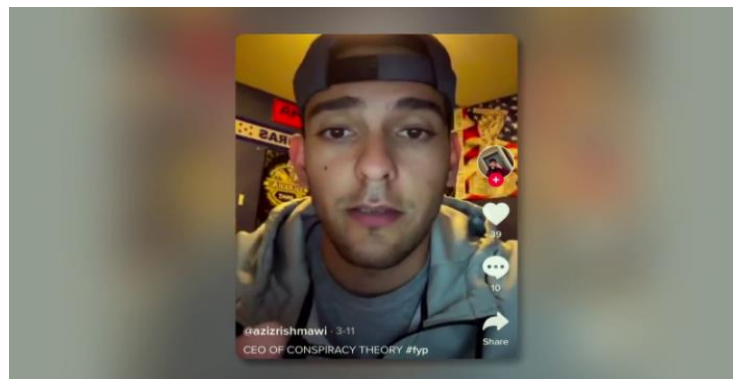
Notwithstanding, in 21st-century media and legislative issues, rumor bomb tidbits thrive on the contrary condition: Data over-burden, discontinuity of consideration, and decreased culture-wide specialists or truth-tellers. Political gossip flourished in current conditions set apart by public information (epistemic) and trust (trustee) emergencies. However, they were no conventional bits of gossip. Rumor bombs compare to fake news and critical political correspondence improvements,

which recognized them from essential gossip tidbits and as a partner to other contemporary correspondence bombs (Harsin, 2015).

The documentary movie *The Social Dilemma* depicts how Covid-19 falsehoods propagate on social media. According to various rumors, some Tik-Tok video makers are making content regarding Covid-19 falsehoods. These content producers think that Covid-19 is a government-created product. The following is an explanation of the rumors about Covid-19 explosives.

Rumor bombs about Covid-19 are an issue spread by some people who believe something contradicts the facts issued by the WHO and the government regarding Covid-19. Most people who spread this issue believe in conspiracies that are widely spread on social media, especially Youtube. On Youtube, there is much content that discusses the Covid-19 conspiracy; this conspiracy about Covid-19 began to be discussed by influencers for content needs. Influencers who believe in the conspiracy will try to change the opinion of their followers to believe in the conspiracy. In the documentary *The Social Dilemma*, several influencers try to convince content viewers about Covid-19 that the pandemic is a hoax pandemic created by the government. This is can be found in the scene of the movie as follows.

Picture 2. Influencer trying to explain that government start the pandemic.
(*The Social Dilemma*, 1:04:01-1:04:05)



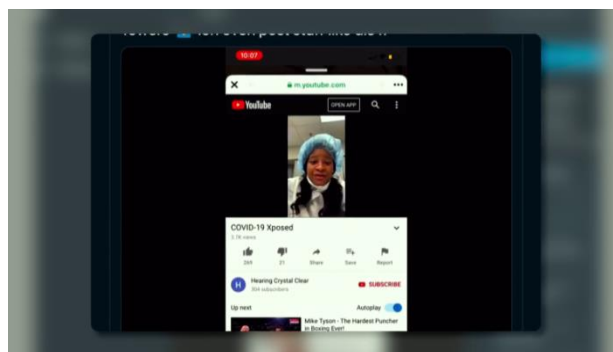
[Man] **I think the US government started this shit.**

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One of the content creators of Tiktok, @azizrishmawi, who is the CEO of the conspiracy theory group on Tiktok, said that the government made Covid-19. The words of the Tiktok influencer above state that the government started this shit. This influencer's words explain that he is trying to tell his followers that the government started this pandemic. This influencer believed in a conspiracy that was widely spread on social media regarding the Covid-19 pandemic; at that time, a lot of conspiracy content claimed that the government had created the Covid-19 virus.

The present pandemic is growing in tandem with recent technical advancements, with the whole world currently attempting to construct 5G network towers. 5G network technology is a progression of 4G in which internet speed increases, allowing social media users to access the internet faster, however, rumors are circulating on social media that Coronavirus does not kill people. These 5G networks kill many people. The rumor is that 5G networks may kill individuals by emitting signals from their towers. Many individuals who are currently utilizing mobile phones with 5G network technology are concerned about this.

Picture 3. Youtuber tries to explain that 5G networks can kill people.
(The Social Dilemma,1:04:16-1:04:21).



[Woman] Coronavirus is not killing people, **it's the 5G radiation that they're pumping out the virus.**

One of the content creators on Youtube who has the channel name Hearing Crystal Clear gave his opinion about Covid-19 through his Youtube account and said

that Covid-19 does not kill humans; what kills humans is the 5G network signal. Signals from the 5G network can spread the Covid-19 virus and kill humans: the World Health Organization (WHO) and The U.S. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stated that the Covid-19 virus was spread from people through coughing droplets from patients infected with the Covid-19 virus and that 5G networks were not proven to be able to spread the Covid-19 virus.

The reuters.com fact-checker stated that the coronavirus outbreak started with a cluster of pneumonia cases of unknown origin in Wuhan, China, which Chinese authorities reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019. The U.S. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that many of the early patients had links to seafood and live animal market where a human might have contracted the virus from an animal. The virus then spreads person-to-person. The symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, tiredness, cough, and shortness of breath that can appear two to 14 days after being exposed to the virus. The coronavirus is spread person-to-person through respiratory droplets, for example, in coughs and sneezes. The World Health Organization states over 285,000 deaths from COVID-19 as of May 13, 2020. Mobile phone technology such as 5G uses radio waves, the lowest-energy form of radiation on the electromagnetic spectrum. As already explained COVID-19 is not spread by radiation but by a virus passed via droplets from person to person.

Covid-19 rumors have spread rapidly on social media, prompting some individuals to trust them. Due to laws that limited people's movement, those initially terrified about the Covid-19 epidemic altered their minds and developed a spirit of resistance. This ideological change is mainly encouraged by social media, where several rumors about Covid-19 are not accurate.

Lying

Post Truth maybe most strikingly set apart by an accentuation on lying, consistent allegations of lying (without verification), and disclosures of lying (with

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persuading evidence) while it is almost challenging to demonstrate unquestionably that there are a more significant number of falsehoods or liars today than previously, there is an honest talk about lying, which guarantees that there are more, exactly certain doubt and documentable lying (Harsin, 2018).

In *The Social Dilemma* movie, the lie was perpetrated by one of the most famous pastors in the United States named Jim Bakker. Jim Bakker admits that products containing silver can kill COVID-19. Jim Bakker said this was to get a lot of buyers from the products advertised on the Jim Bakker Show television show.

Picture 4. One of the talk shows discussed the truth that Silver Solution can kill the Covid-19 virus (The Social Dilemma, 1:04:48-1:04:54)



[Jim Bakker]: **You're saying that the silver solution would be effective.**

[Woman]: Well, let's say it **hasn't been tested on this strain of the coronavirus**, but but it has been tested on other strains of the coronavirus and has been able to eliminate it within 12 hours.

As one of the pastors with large followers, Jim Bakker advertises Silver Solution and associates it with religious material. During the event, Jim Bakker said that God had created the Silver Solution product to cure COVID-19. The confession made by Jim Bakker based on what he got after he entered prison, Jim Bakker acknowledged that God had provided a way for healing covid-19 by using Silver Solution products. This statement from Jim Bakker caused people who watched this

show to believe that Silver Solution was the cure for Covid-19. The influence of Jim Bakker as a priest has a vital role in the spread of this fake news.

This false confession from Jim Bakker is, of course, a matter of concern to many people. Jim Bakker was seen making sales by acknowledging that God had brought Silver Solution as a healer from Covid-19, which successfully influenced many people to give Silver Solution products.

Jim Bakker's admission that God sent Silver Solution as a Covid-19 medicine is his means of attracting many consumers for the things he promotes. As a preacher, Jim Bakker uses the name of God to acquire the faith of many people in the Silver Solution product's ability to remove Covid-19 from the bodies of persons infected with the virus. Jim Bakker's claim that God has sent Silver Solution as a Covid-19 medication, many individuals have been influenced. According to a republica.com source, Jim Bakker made a profit of roughly 90 million dollars or 1.3 billion rupiahs on the sale of Silver Solution.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TRUTH BASED ON MISINFORMATION

The truth has been formed based on disinformation after many people's perspectives have altered as a result of misinformation published on social media. Misinformation regarding Covid-19 is frequently circulated on social media, trapping many people who are seeking for information on Covid-19. Individuals who are misinformed about Covid-19 will build their own truth about Covid-19, and that reality is based on misinformation supplied by people to mislead people's opinion.

The three forms of misinformation about Covid-19 outlined above (Fake News, Rumor Bombs, and Lying) that have circulated on social media and have resulted in the emergence of new opinions about Covid-19 in the society. The public is beginning to mistrust the reality of Covid-19, which may kill many people in an instant, as the result of a lot of disinformation being published. Misinformation circulated on social media, ranging from the use of harmful ingredients in Covid-19

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cure to the connection between Covid-19 and politics, has led many individuals to doubt the Covid-19 virus. The emerging fact in public opinion is that Covid-19 is a virus produced by the government to kill people, and as a result, many people have flocked to the streets to oppose the government. There are two facts that have emerged as a result of disinformation propagated on social media.

The Covid-19 Pandemic is Hoax Virus

With so much conflicting information regarding Covid-19, many are beginning to mistrust the virus. The news circulating on social media about Covid-19 drugs that use hazardous materials leads people to believe that the World Health Organization is lying about this virus. This, combined with restrictions on community activities, working from home, and a ban on gatherings, causes people to feel restless. People began to dare to leave their houses, violate health protocols, and even conduct protests to eliminate activity limits or social distance as a result of the restrictions on activities and disinformation on social media.

Democratic Party as the Spreader Fear of Covid-19

The presidential election in the United States will be place in 2020, coinciding with the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus. The current president, Donald Trump, talked in the White House on the connection between Democrats and Covid-19. Donald Trump accuses those responsible for the public's fear about Covid-19. Donald Trump, the President of the United States at the time, did not believe in the existence of the Covid-19 virus, and he ran a campaign without regard for health procedures.

Donald Trump accused the Democratic Party of promoting panic and using Covid-19 as a political tool by Joe Biden as political opponents in the 2020 presidential race. As is well known, Donald Trump, the president who is regarded as a failure in addressing the Covid-19 epidemic by Joe Biden, is regarded as unconcerned about reacting to this pandemic. From this, several difficulties arose over the Democratic Party using this pandemic crisis to win elections in 2020, till the

construction of an invalid truth that the Democratic Party was the mastermind of the Covid-19 virus's propagation.

With the truth produced as a result of misinformation has an impact on society. The dissemination of misinformation has an impact not only online, but also in real life. Misinformation in the form of post-truth has a beneficial effect on criminals but a detrimental effect on society. Truth founded on falsehood has an impact on society and politics.

CONCLUSION

The use of social media to spread misinformation in the midst of a pandemic causing chaos is one of several social effects reflected in the *The Social Dilemma* movie. Misinformation and disinformation have creating a misleading in distributing fact in the social media as well as construct a new fact. It is also affect in societal life, particularly in the way of people react and believe of some news.

Fake news, rumors and lying about Covid 19 have circulated on social media and have resulted in the emergence of new opinions about Covid-19 in the society. People began to mistrust the reality of Covid-19, which may kill many people in an instant, as the result of a lot of disinformation being published. Misinformation circulated on social media, ranging from the use of harmful ingredients in Covid-19 cure to the connection between Covid-19 and politics, has led many individuals to doubt the Covid-19 virus and led to the creation of a new truth based on widespread misinformation, namely that Covid-19 is a hoax virus.

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