Uncovering the Factors That Influence the Public to Spread Infodemic in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain factors that influence people to continue disseminating the infodemic even when they have a high level of education. This research uses a qualitative approach with data mined using interview techniques and literature studies. The qualitative research gathered data through in-depth online interviews and literature studies. Key informants, including experts in Communication Science, Religion, Social Media, and Health, were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, allowing for flexible yet focused discussions. The study's findings identify 12 factors contributing to the continued spread of the infodemic, including social media ownership, a critical attitude towards information, information-seeking skills, emotional maturity in processing information, the demands of daily life, the frequency of social media use, social media friend networks, efforts to enhance digital literacy, a tendency to avoid seeking information clarification, a narrow interpretation of religious teachings, belief in conspiracy theories, and specific underlying motives. This research contributes significantly by shedding light on this pressing issue, offering insights crucial for formulating evidence-based policies and interventions to enhance digital literacy and effectively counter the infodemic. Future researchers should concentrate on investigating motive aspects. Moreover, rigorous statistical tests in quantitative research also can be considered to enhance the depth of analysis, providing a quantitative measure of the influence exerted by each identified factor.

INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus outbreak worldwide since the end of 2019, has been accompanied by the spread of false information about COVID-19, known as the infodemic. The infodemic phenomenon is rife in the community through the public information space and spreads very easily and quickly on social media and digital (Ditjen Aptika, 2021). Infodemic information is abundant but makes it difficult for people to find reliable and reliable sources when the public needs it (WHO, 2020). Infodemic is a severe problem because it is misleading and even life-threatening. Researchers say the infodemic arises because the correct dissemination of COVID-19 information is still lacking (Shereen et al., 2020). However, research has also found that education does not guarantee that someone can distinguish hoax information about COVID-19 (Abdulai et al., 2021). Other studies say that a person's high digital

literacy remains a behavior of spreading hoaxes (Kominfo, 2020). This phenomenon triggers an interesting question: What factors influence people to continue to spread infodemic despite their high digital literacy? In addressing the spread of the infodemic through social media, it is essential to engage in media literacy education, which includes critical skills in checking the veracity of information, recognition of trusted sources, and awareness of the effects of the infodemic.

Social media has a significant role in the dissemination of the infodemic. Social media allows information to spread quickly and reach the broader community in a short time. Identification performed by (Bridgman et al., 2020) shows a strong link between exposure to social media and misperceptions about COVID-19 and social media. It is associated with public non-compliance due to increased misperceptions about COVID-19. False or unverified content can easily be posted and shared by social media users, creating a wider circle of false information spread. Social media offers a platform that provides users with freedom of expression. Social media plays a role in influencing people's behavior and views. When social media users see people in the user's circle sharing false information, they tend to believe it and continue spreading it without further verification. Digital media ecosystems that are not critically screened by netizens will easily increase the spread of the infodemic (Teluma, 2020).

 Developing a critical attitude in social media users requires improving media literacy and critical skills. It aims to facilitate intelligent and responsible social media users consuming and sharing information in the digital age. The abundance of information as part of the infodemic form makes it difficult to determine valid sources (Dharma & Kasim, 2021). Information is abundant on social media in times of crisis, potentially causing individuals to behave in whatever is deemed appropriate (Yohanida & Herdiana, 2021). Emotion regulation skills can help social media users maintain composure and clarity in the face of the infodemic. Steps such as researching further to verify information, consulting media experts, or seeking emotional support from trusted people can be solutions to avoid resentment, anger, or panic that can worsen the situation. Some researchers state that the infodemic arose because the correct spread of COVID-19 information was still lacking (Shereen et al., 2020). Researchers suspect this phenomenon occurs because infodemic is not easily identified.

The spread of infodemic occurs because of the low ability of the public to detect hoaxes. General public knowledge to identify hoaxes is caused by inadequate digital literacy (Al Zou'bi, 2022; Fardiah et al., 2020). The lack of digital literacy can make people more vulnerable to hoaxes and challenging to distinguish accurate information from false ones. It will be more difficult for the public to detect hoaxes from groups or individuals who actively spread hoaxes with a specific purpose, such as creating chaos or influencing public opinion. Hoaxes can also be a source of information, even though the information provided is fake news, which then becomes knowledge and underlies public opinion (Rahmawati et al., 2023). The importance of media literacy that involves training in critical skills, using trusted sources, and awareness of hoax signs can help improve people's ability to detect and avoid hoaxes. Data from research (Cholifah & Adrianto, 2023) shows that only 54.9% of the population is willing to be vaccinated because of fake news or hoaxes. According to "Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan COVID-19", data on disinfodemic findings in Indonesia produced by the AIS team of the Directorate General of Aptics shows that 1,471 spread of pandemic hoax concerns were detected from various digital platforms (Astuti et al., 2023).

This article results from investigating the questions in the introduction's first paragraph. Therefore, this article has significance because it can help formulate policies related to digital literacy in dealing with the infodemic. In addition, research on digital literacy in audiences related to a relatively complete infodemic is still rare (Apuke & Omar, 2021). Previous research focused on mastering information technology, computers, and networks for educational purposes, not research on infodemic (Sumiati & Wijanarko, 2020; Tejedor et al., 2020).

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach. Researchers mined the data using interview techniques and literature studies. Interviews were conducted to explore data on factors influencing society to disseminate infodemic, while literature studies were used to explore relevant data and support the findings revealed through interviews. Interviews result in different interactions and influence recorded information (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with key sources selected from experts with several specific criteria. These criteria are Communication Science Expert, Religious Expert, Social Media Activist, and Health Expert. Researchers interviewed all interviewees online using semi-structured interviews. In semi-structured interviews, researchers have compiled several questions as a guide but are flexible. The researchers engaged five informants: NK (47 years old), a communication expert from the Digital Literacy Advocacy Network (Japelidi); BS (54 years old), an Islamic scholar from an Islamic university in Yogyakarta; RD (56 years old) from a Christian university in Salatiga; NS (38 years old), a social media observer and activist from Solo, and FT (57 years old), a public health expert from a prestigious public health program at a university in Yogyakarta. All informants have an outstanding reputation for involvement in various social media and digital literacy discussions, which led the researcher to believe they could effectively respond to the research questions.

The researcher conducted online interviews, scheduling them to accommodate the informants' availability. On average, each interview with the informants lasted approximately one hour and proceeded in an efficient and semi-structured manner. Rather than asking questions sequentially, the researcher allowed the conversation to flow naturally. Before posing questions, the researcher provided information about the research issue, explicitly highlighting the phenomenon of the infodemic spreading among highly educated social media users.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The spread of the infodemic in Indonesia remains very high and presents a significant challenge. Despite the continuous increase in digital literacy in the country, many people are still susceptible to false information and COVID-19-related hoaxes, including among those with higher levels of education. The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) reported that between January 2020 and March 2022, there were 5,727 hoax-related contents related to COVID-19 (Puspita, 2022). These infodemic materials spread across various platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

Kominfo and various civil society organizations have been actively promoting social literacy. Additionally, Kominfo has collaborated with the National Police to enforce the law, but hoaxes persist. The government has also taken legal action against 767 hoax-related contents related to COVID-19. Some examples of pandemic-related hoaxes circulating through social media include false claims that the COVID-19 vaccine contains magnetic microchips (Mukhlis et al., 2020), that consuming garlic and salt can turn a positive COVID-19 test into a negative result (Mth, 2021), and that using eucalyptus oil can prevent COVID-19 (Kristian, 2020), among others.

The COVID-19 infodemic has permeated among highly educated individuals through various social media platforms, influenced by several factors. As a result of interviews with informants, researchers found that the spread of the infodemic still occurs in highly educated people. There are 12 influencing factors. These factors contribute either partially or jointly to the highly educated society. Hence, they continue to spread the infodemic. Infodemic dissemination occurs either intentionally or unintentionally. All informants believe that all factors contribute to the spread of the infodemic. However, all informants say it is difficult to determine which factors are more influential than others, except through scientific research. Researchers describe the results and discuss 12 factors influencing the public to spread the infodemic through the points below.

A. Social Media Ownership

Social media ownership is the first aspect of infodemic dissemination. If someone does not have social media, then the circulation of infodemic does not occur. The informant of this study said that social media ownership is very high. On the other hand, social media is the most extensive channel for the spread of infodemic. This factor is in line with Mastel's research, which calls social media the largest hoax channel with a percentage of 87.50%, and mainstream mass media, such as television media, are not included in being referred to as hoax channels (Mastel, 2019). Mainstream media does not enter as hoax distributors because mainstream media has a good check and recheck tradition so that it is relatively free from hoaxes. The rapid, massive, and unrestricted spread of information on social media platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic has become fertile ground for fear, uncertainty, and the rise of fake news and virus-related conspiracy beliefs. In this infodemic, the role of social media exposure and related conspiracy beliefs on vaccination intentions is poorly understood (Ghaddar et al., 2022).

Social media use increased by 20□87% worldwide during the crisis (Launa, 2020). This use of social media can affect the infodemic, which is the massive spread of false or inaccurate information that spreads rapidly through social media platforms. Social media has algorithms that determine what content is shown to users. Social media ownership centralized in one or more entities can influence these algorithms to serve certain content more dominantly. If such entities have particular interests or political affiliations, they can manipulate algorithms to promote certain types of content. It can reinforce the spread of false information or limit the spread of accurate information. Hoaxes tend to spread the ideology of their spreaders from time to time (Rodríguez-Ferrándiz et al., 2021).

B. Critical Attitude to Information

All informants in the study said that critical attitudes towards information greatly influenced the behavior of infodemic dissemination. A critical attitude helps a person find answers to a problem's doubts (Changwong et al., 2018). A person's critical behavior will manifest through searching for evidence to support claims and evaluating the validity of arguments (Machete & Turpin, 2020; Shutaleva et al., 2021). Research informants say, "People who are critical of information are less likely to disseminate infodemic than those with low critical power" (NS interview, 2021). The literature study aligns with these findings, where a critical attitude helps the public better analyze and evaluate information (Heard et al., 2020). A person who has a critical attitude will examine

the source of information before they believe it. They will find out whether the source is credible or reputable. A critical person will look for additional facts, match them with other sources, and look for evidence that supports the information before drawing conclusions and spreading it on social media.

A critical person will try to understand the background of the information, including the time, place, and conditions under which the information appears. A critical attitude also enriches perspective in creating and producing media content or critical presuming (Muannas & Mansyur, 2020). A critical person will not carelessly spread unverified information. They will be careful not to be part of the infodemic spread, which could worsen the situation. Critical assessment of all information is one of the primary keys to counteracting the spread of hoaxes in the community (Sari et al., 2021). A critical attitude involves the use of common sense in evaluating information. A critical person will consider information's consequences, logic, and rationality before they accept it. A critical attitude towards infodemic information is crucial in protecting ourselves from false or misleading information. With a critical attitude, people can make better decisions, avoid panic, and disseminate accurate and valuable information to others.

C. Information Search Skills

Information skills include searching, selecting, and assessing online information (Miranda et al., 2022; Mota & Cilento, 2020; van Deursen & van Dijk, 2010). In this study, all informants agreed that the ability to find information helps someone distinguish between hoaxes and non-hoaxes. When evaluating information, it is necessary to pay attention to signs that indicate a potential hoax, such as sensational titles, glaring spelling or grammatical errors, narrative inconsistencies, or unverifiable sources. However, information search skills must be accompanied by a critical awareness of information because social media has an algorithm to form an Echo Chamber (Dubois & Blank, 2018; Grömping, 2014; Terren & Borge, 2021; Vicario et al., 2016). When searching for information, social media 'sorts' similar information so that it continues to appear so that users only find information that matches and supports their opinions of social media users themselves, otherwise known as the Filter Bubble phenomenon (Chen, 2022; Grömping, 2014; Indriani et al., 2020a; Wulandari et al., 2021).

The filter bubble phenomenon is where a person is trapped in a finite circle of information, often in line with his or her views and preferences. It happens because of the algorithms and personalization mechanisms used by social media platforms and search engines to tailor the content presented to users based on their search history, interactions, and previous preferences. Researchers and critics fear the bubble filter phenomenon could isolate people from obtaining information about what they want rather than what they need (Indriani et al., 2020b). In other words, users tend only to be exposed to points of view that they already know and agree with, while alternative or different viewpoints are often overlooked or avoided. The results of research conducted by (Kertanegara et al., 2020) showed that when seeking information, the respondents studied tend to have media literacy skills at a basic level.

D. Emotional Maturity in Receiving Information

Emotional maturity influences the dissemination of infodemic delivered by most research informants. They say that people with weak emotional maturity tend not to think long and are easily ignited by emotions to spread hoaxes, especially if the information is wrapped in religious issues. Emotions are the tendency to have distinctive feelings when dealing with particular objects (Fitri & Adelya, 2017). Researchers say unstable emotions cause people to be careful, so they cannot think well, making it easy to be tempted to share infodemic (Bungsu & Rosadi, 2021; Rezapour et al., 2022). Emotional maturity is a person's ability to control, understand, and express feelings healthily and productively. The results of the study conducted by Tandon et al. showed four dimensions of emotional maturity: emotional stability, emotional development, social adjustment, and personality integration (Tandon et al., 2021).

Based on the results of research conducted by Agustini et al. (2022), the older a person is, the more emotionally mature they will be because they have more extraordinary adaptability to anxiety. When a person experiences high emotional maturity, they can better evaluate information wisely and are not affected by negative emotions. People will be more critical of the information they receive and think objectively before sharing it with others. On the other hand, if a person has low emotional maturity, they will be susceptible to the influence of negative emotions, such as anxiety or anger (Marta et al., 2023). It can affect the way they interpret and disseminate information. Therefore, each needs to develop emotional maturity in receiving information. In addition, technological advances are also a determining factor because users can easily access information through the Internet (Masfufah, 2020).

E. Busyness in Daily Life

Nowadays, a person's busy life affects his social media usage activities. The informant argues that busyness

generally affects his digital activities, thus reducing the possibility of participating in spreading the infodemic, as represented in the following snippet: "Busy People have a low likelihood of participating in spreading the infodemic. More thought and time are consumed with work and other activities so that they do not pay attention to the infodemic" (Interview, NK, 42 years). A person's busy life factors in the possibility of having little time to read or disseminate information without verification. When people have other responsibilities and priorities, such as work, family, or other daily activities, they have no desire or time to spread hoaxes. These priorities help keep one's focus on the more essential things in life.

Business in everyday life can affect the development of a person's critical skills. Although the busy factor can help reduce the spread of hoaxes, it is also essential to see that busyness is only sometimes a guarantee that someone will not spread hoaxes. Other factors, such as understanding how to verify information, lack of digital literacy, or particular motivations, can also influence a person's behavior related to the spread of hoaxes. The cause of many fake news circulating in digital media is the tendency of people to believe in information or news easily, and people's habits are too lazy to read. Hence, the information received is only a piece or wrong (Wastujaya et al., 2022). Therefore, education, awareness, and critical skills remain essential in countering the spread of hoaxes in society.

F. Frequency of Social Media Use

All informants agreed that the frequency with which social media use influenced the spread of the infodemic. Nevertheless, the behavior has a double meaning. Some can have a higher impact in spreading the infodemic, and some have the opposite effect. "Hoax information is often difficult to detect easily, even by people who often use social media, so they are not aware of participating in disseminating infodemic. Fact checks are always published after hoaxes spread. The public may have rushed to disseminate the infodemic earlier than the verified info. On the other hand, people who often use social media may receive a lot of fact-check information about infodemic, to provide awareness not to participate in spreading infodemic" (Interview, NS, 42 years). Another alternative is to use existing public sentiment data prediction models on social media that are useful as research domains, including public health, and provide research paradigms based on social media infodemic to build real-time prediction and early warning models in the future (Yan et al., 2022).

Active users of social media today are generally teenagers. Teenagers are used to commenting, sharing, and giving criticism on social media. This habit can trigger hoaxes because the delivery of news is uncertain of the truth, and he tends to spread hate speech for content that he does not like (Rahmadhany et al., 2021). The character of social media allows information to spread quickly and easily without going through a rigorous verification process. An uncertain piece of information can quickly go viral before its truth can be confirmed. It is because the like, share, and hashtag features make the information disseminated trending in a short time, like a disease outbreak spread by a virus (Arifuddin et al., 2020). Other studies have also found that it is still difficult to distinguish between hoaxes, even though the informants studied show a desire to verify the information received (Nurrahmi & Syam, 2020).

G. Networks of Friends on Social Media

All informants agree that the network of friends influences the spread of the infodemic. As RD (54 years old) argues: "The network of friends often influences the dissemination of the infodemic. If the network of friends consists of people who are not aware of the infodemic, then that person will become more and more involved in spreading the infodemic because no one reminds him." Literary studies reinforce this opinion that social media networks can be negative group thoughts, where group members become uncritical and only support thoughts in the group (Akhmad et al., 2021; Kanthawongs et al., 2010). A group can become a group if there is illusive unanimity, does not question the ideas proposed, always gives justification reasons and stereotypes, self-censorship appears, and members are pressured (Lunenburg, 2010). Social media, as one of the public spaces, is very open and not taboo if there are differences in views and opinions (Nurhajati et al., 2022).

A social media network of friends refers to the relationships and connections between users on social media platforms. Social media allows users to connect with people from different backgrounds, geographical areas, and similar interests. With social media, the number of friends owned can increase because users can add anyone to become friends (Pratidina & Mitha, 2023). Users can search, add, or follow people they know and even those they do not know. Networks of friends within social media make it possible to spread content quickly and widely. When users within a friend network share false or misleading information, it can quickly spread to other people in the network. This speed of spread can increase the risk of infodemic spreading rapidly before misinformation can be corrected or verified (Salim et al., 2023). This risk is due to a lack of awareness that causes things to happen that we can anticipate (Fajarlie & Ngadzimah, 2021).

H. Capacity Building Related to Digital Literacy

The informant in this study said that capacity building through various digital literacy training pieces also influenced the infodemic dissemination. "In digital literacy pieces of training, generally participants will get material on how to recognize hoaxes so that they do not fall into spreading them" (Interview, NS 42 years). This finding aligns with literature studies that say high digital literacy can help recognize hoaxes and reduce the possibility of spreading infodemic (Sya'diyah, 2021). Capacity building in digital literacy refers to efforts to improve the understanding and skills of individuals or groups in using digital technology effectively and responsibly. Increasing digital literacy is crucial because technology increasingly affects various aspects of life, including education, work, and social participation.

Support training programs, both formal and non-formal, that focus on technology skills, such as the use of hardware, software, internet navigation, online security, and information analysis, can assist users in better understanding and using digital technology. In addition, it will also increase the awareness of social media users about security threats and online risks. The media is prone to be trapped as perpetrators and victims of information chaos. One of the things that can be done is to increase its role in the digital literacy movement (Widiantara, 2020). Training in digital security practices, such as using strong passwords, avoiding phishing, and maintaining personal data privacy, is crucial and needed in the digital age. Digital literacy training for social media users by identifying fake news, understanding information bias, and developing critical thinking when consuming online content is one way to anticipate the infodemic. This kind of digital literacy training is successfully run by community organizations, including public libraries (Detlor et al., 2019).

I. Lazy Attitude to Seek Clarification of Hoax Information

Informants say that being lazy to clarify information will affect the dissemination of the infodemic. "Laziness will make someone unwilling to search for comparative information and still spread hoaxes even though they may not share much infodemic. This lazy attitude may be because we feel bothered and achieve looking for fact-check hoaxes" (interview, RD). The informant's opinion aligns with literature studies that say laziness still affects the spreading of hoaxes, even though the person has good enough digital literacy (Assidik, 2014; Nurrahmi & Syam, 2020; Ulya, 2018). Being lazy to verify the information before disseminating it can devastate others affected by the misinformation. If social media users carelessly spread hoax information without clarifying, it can also damage the reputation of a person or even an agency. It can result in financial losses, legal problems, or even damage to social relationships, especially for users as perpetrators of spreading hoax information.

The information age continues to grow rapidly like today. Hoaxes often appear that can confuse the community. The importance of clarification can avoid confusion and clearly understand the facts. Clarification is one of the obstacles to hoaxing information spreading even more widely on social media (Nurcholis Majid, 2020). As a wise user of social media, it is mandatory to have a responsibility to disseminate accurate and responsible information. According to researchers, the effect of being lazy to seek clarification becomes one thing that does not fulfill these responsibilities and can cause unnecessary chaos or anxiety.

J. Understanding Religious Teachings Narrowly

The informant said that understanding religious teachings narrowly influenced the spread of the infodemic. "People with a narrow understanding of religion still believe in hoaxes. They believe that a person's life and death are in God's hands, so they keep spreading COVID treatment info even though it is a hoax" (interview, BS). On the other hand, religion also emphasizes the existence of sin when spreading hoaxes. This statement aligns with literature studies that say that religious teachings prohibit the spreading of hoaxes and can be subject to severe torture (Ahmad & Hotimah, 2019; Alisyahbana, 2019; Mazaya, 2019; Siburian, 2021). People with a narrow understanding of religion only seek and disseminate information about their beliefs. They can also reject information that contradicts the teachings of their religion without conducting objective research or verification. Phenomena such as these can lead to the spread of inaccurate data or limit broader perspectives.

A shortsighted understanding of religion can discourage people from accepting or considering new information that may contradict their beliefs. It can hinder their ability to access a broader range of knowledge and can trigger the spread of misinformation or superficiality. A narrow understanding of religion can sometimes lead to scientific knowledge or research conflicts. A person with a shortsighted outlook may reject or ignore scientific evidence that does not match their beliefs. It can affect the infodemic's dissemination because the information based on facts and research can be ignored or deemed invalid. If society is apathetic toward ethical responsibility in spreading hoaxes, this can hurt community harmony (Seran & Ludji, 2022).

K. Belief in conspiracy theories

Informants say belief in conspiracy theories influenced the spread of the infodemic. A conspiracy theory is a belief about a group of actors colluding secretly to achieve nefarious ends (van Prooijen & Douglas, 2018). Many conspiracy theories are circulating on the internet; for example, COVID is a conspiracy of global elites, COVID is China's biological weapons program; COVID is Bill Gates' attempt to sell vaccines, COVID is the result of 5G generation internet radiation, COVID is a conspiracy of doctors and local governments, and so on. In schemes, people match various information to support their beliefs. "They believe COVID is a conspiracy, so they do what they think is right, including continuing to spread the infodemic" (NK interview). The informant's opinion aligns with literature studies that say that belief in conspiracy theories affects the spread of infodemic (De Coninck et al., 2021; Garfin et al., 2020; Nadzir, 2020).

Infodemic refers to the spread of excessive, false, or misleading information, primarily through social media and other digital platforms. Conspiracy theories are often part of an infodemic, where information not verified or supported by obvious facts is associated with nefarious plans, manipulations, or conspiracies involving powerful parties. The massiveness of fake news that can obscure the facts and result in a decrease in public trust in the programs that the government has prepared can aggravate the situation with various kinds of conspiracy theories that exist and cause public unrest (Nabila & Santoso, 2021).

L. Have a Specific Motive

In addition to ignorance and accidents, some people deliberately spread infodemic. They spread the infodemic with several motives. Motive is the reason for doing something (Armstrong M, 2014). All informants agree that the motives for applying an endemic vary greatly, as NS (42 years old) states: "Sometimes people deliberately spread infodemic. The motives range from politics, pranks, religion, and others." This opinion is in line with literature studies that say the motives for spreading hoaxes vary, including economic motives, ideology and politicization, pleasure, joking and mocking, muddying the atmosphere and destroying, and religious motives (Maimun, 2019), as well as satisfaction motives (Rahadi, 2017).

A person uses an infodemic to influence political views or achieve specific goals. The motive is spreading false information or manipulating facts to strengthen their opinions or damage the reputation of political opponents. Some individuals or groups spread infodemic for financial gain, for example, by promoting fake products or services, deceiving people, or taking advantage of fears and worries to gain economic growth. Spreading infodemic with such specific motives is unethical behavior and can hurt society. Misinformation provided to the public ultimately determines how they act and disseminates certain moral judgments to those who read the disinformation (Bafadhal & Santoso, 2020). It can be essential for us always to be vigilant in verifying information before trusting it and sharing it. Seek to obtain information from reliable sources and consider it from different points of view to avoid spreading the infodemic.

CONCLUSION

The infodemic phenomenon poses a grave threat that demands urgent attention from all stakeholders. Its impact on government efforts to manage the spread of COVID-19 must be considered. Despite a rise in digital literacy among the populace, as evidenced by the increase in Indonesia's digital literacy score from 3.46 points in 2020 to 3.49 in 2022 (Agustini, 2022), individuals remain susceptible to participating in the dissemination of infodemic content. This qualitative study identified twelve key factors influencing this behavior, shedding light on the issue's complexity. These factors encompass social media ownership, critical thinking regarding information, information search skills, emotional maturity in processing information, daily life busyness, social media usage frequency, social media friend networks, digital literacy capacity building, reluctance to seek information clarification, insular understanding of religious teachings, belief in conspiracy theories, and specific motives. While these factors provide valuable insights, the motive factor requires further in-depth exploration due to its comprehensive nature. We recommend that future researchers concentrate on investigating this aspect, offering a nuanced perspective on individuals' motivations. Moreover, rigorous statistical tests in quantitative research can enhance the depth of analysis, providing a quantitative measure of the influence exerted by each identified factor.

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