

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS ROLE IN THE SPREAD OF
ISLAMOPHOBIA STIGMA**



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SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS ROLE IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAMOPHOBIA
STIGMA

THESIS

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ABSTRAK

MEDIA SOSIAL DAN PERANNYA TERHADAP PENYEBARAN STIGMA ISLAMOFOBIA

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Media sosial telah menjadi inovasi besar dalam komunikasi modern, memungkinkan penyebaran informasi yang cepat dan luas. Namun, di balik manfaatnya, media sosial juga berkontribusi dalam menyebarkan narasi negatif, termasuk stigma terhadap Islam. Dalam konteks Islamofobia, media sosial menjadi saluran penyebaran stereotip negatif yang memperkuat persepsi keliru tentang Islam sebagai agama yang identik dengan kekerasan. Representasi digital yang bias serta penyebaran informasi yang tidak berimbang semakin memperparah prasangka terhadap Muslim di masyarakat.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi stigma negatif terhadap Islam yang disebar media sosial serta menganalisis mekanisme digital seperti polarisasi opini, algoritma, *filter bubble*, dan *echo chamber* dalam penyebaran Islamofobia. Melalui interaksi pengguna dan kurasi konten berbasis algoritma, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana media sosial tidak hanya menyampaikan informasi, tetapi juga membentuk persepsi tentang Islam.

Penelitian kualitatif ini menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis dengan studi literatur dan analisis wacana untuk mengkaji pola penyebaran stigma Islamophobia di media sosial. Dengan pendekatan sosiologi, penelitian ini menganalisis peran media sosial dalam membentuk opini publik terkait Islam. Mengacu pada teori Islamophobia Christopher Allen dan konsep kekuasaan media Marshall McLuhan, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa media sosial tidak hanya menyebarkan stigma melalui isi pesan, tetapi juga melalui cara kerjanya sebagai perantara yang mempercepat narasi diskriminatif. Contohnya, berita yang mengaitkan Islam dengan terorisme mendapat interaksi tinggi, diperkuat algoritma dan *echo chamber*, sehingga persepsi negatif terhadap Islam semakin berkembang.

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa media sosial memperkuat stigma negatif terhadap Islam melalui framing yang menggambarkan sebagai ancaman, sering dikaitkan dengan terorisme dan radikalisme. Representasi ini diperparah oleh hoaks dan disinformasi yang tersebar tanpa verifikasi. Selain itu, mekanisme seperti polarisasi opini, algoritma, *filter bubble*, dan *echo chamber* membatasi paparan pengguna terhadap perspektif yang beragam, memperkuat bias, dan memperdalam polarisasi antara komunitas Muslim dan non-Muslim. Dengan demikian, media sosial tidak hanya menjadi sarana komunikasi, tetapi juga agen aktif dalam membentuk persepsi publik terhadap Islam.

Penelitian ini, meskipun memberikan wawasan penting, memiliki keterbatasan karena tidak melibatkan data empiris atau analisis langsung terhadap pengguna media sosial. Penelitian lanjutan disarankan untuk mengintegrasikan studi kasus atau survei lapangan untuk memberikan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif tentang dampak media sosial terhadap persepsi masyarakat terhadap Islam.

Kata Kunci: Media Sosial, Islamofobia, Filter Bubble, Echo Chamber, Polarisasi Opini, Algoritma

ABSTRACT

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS ROLE IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAMOPHOBIA STIGMA

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Social media has become a major innovation in modern communication, allowing for the rapid and widespread dissemination of information. However, behind the benefits, social media also contributes to spreading negative narratives, including stigma against Islam. In the context of Islamophobia, social media is a channel for spreading negative stereotypes that reinforce the wrong perception of Islam as a religion that is synonymous with violence. Biased digital representation and unbalanced dissemination of information further exacerbate prejudice against Muslims in society.

This study aims to identify the negative stigma against Islam spread by social media and analyze digital mechanisms such as opinion polarization, algorithms, *filter bubbles*, and *echo chambers* in the spread of Islamophobia. Through user interaction and algorithm-based content curation, this research explores how social media not only conveys information, but also shapes perceptions of Islam.

This qualitative research uses a descriptive-analytical method with literature study and discourse analysis to examine the pattern of the spread of Islamophobia stigma on social media. With a sociological approach, this study analyzes the role of social media in shaping public opinion related to Islam. Drawing on Christopher Allen's theory of Islamophobia and Marshall McLuhan's concept of media power, the study finds that social media not only spreads stigma through the content of messages, but also through its way of working as an intermediary that accelerates discriminatory narratives. For example, news that associates Islam with terrorism gets high interaction, strengthened by algorithms and *echo chambers*, so that negative perceptions of Islam are growing.

The results of this study show that social media reinforces the negative stigma against Islam through framing that describes it as a threat, often associated with terrorism and radicalism. This representation is exacerbated by hoaxes and disinformation that are spread without verification. In addition, mechanisms such as opinion polarization, algorithms, *bubble filters*, and *echo chambers* limit users' exposure to diverse perspectives, reinforce biases, and deepen polarization between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Thus, social media is not only a means of communication, but also an active agent in shaping public perception of Islam.

This research, while providing important insights, has limitations because it does not involve empirical data or direct analysis of social media users. Further research is suggested to integrate case studies or field surveys to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of social media on public perceptions of Islam.

Keywords: Social Media, Islamophobia, Filter Bubble, Echo Chamber, Opinion Polarization, Algorithm

To Honorable,
Dean of Faculty of Ushuluddin
University of Darussalam Gontor-Ponorogo

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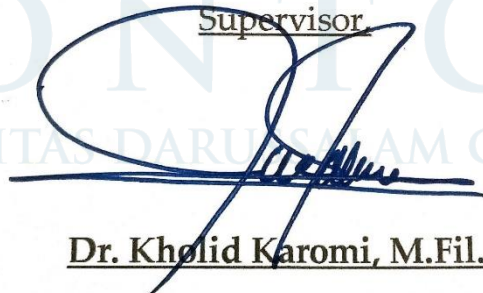
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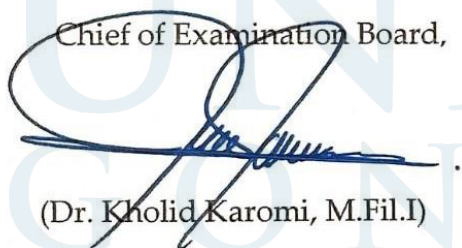
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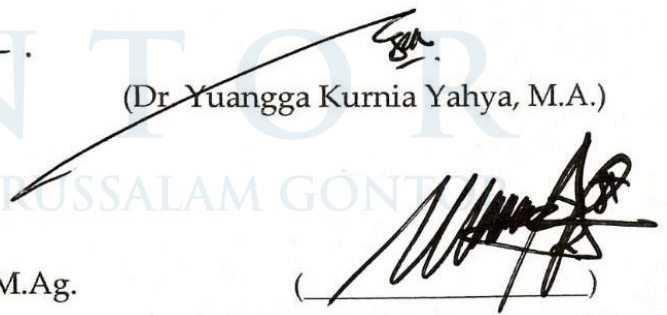
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I declare that this thesis is the result of my research, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at the University of Darussalam Gontor or other institutions. When otherwise found that this thesis is plagiarism, I am ready to accept any punishment according to the university's academic regulations.

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MOTTO



يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهْلَةٍ
فَتُصِيبُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ تَذَمِينَ

*If you have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information,
investigate, lest you harm people out of ignorance and become regretful over what
you have done. (Al-Hujurat (49): 6*

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to :

Allah has given me the strength and patience to complete this thesis.

My beloved parents, Yoyok Haryosembodo, and Suwarti have always been my greatest supporters and inspiration. Your endless prayers, unconditional love, and unwavering encouragement have been my source of strength throughout this academic journey. Thank you for teaching me the values of hard work, patience, and perseverance. Your sacrifices and dedication to my education have been the foundation of every success I achieve. This accomplishment is not just mine; it is yours as well. I pray that Allah SWT grants you health, happiness, and countless blessings as a token of gratitude for all you have given me.



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May Allah reciprocate a proportionate reward and bless them, and may this humble thesis be valuable and useful for the readers, especially for the writer/researcher.

UNIDA Gontor, 13th of January 2024 M

13^h of Rajab 1446 H

Sincerely yours,



(Damay Permatasari)

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