THE POTENTIAL OF POLITICAL RADICALISM THROUGH HASHTAGS IN TWITTER

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ABSTRACT

Twitter is a social media platform that is often used as a means of digital political communication in Indonesia. Revealing the discourse on the three periods through Twitter makes Twitter a medium for the public to convey their ideas through tweets and hashtags, which can potentially become political radicalism. This happened because the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, had been elected for two periods, making it impossible to return to continue his administration. According to the 1945 Constitution, the provisions of Article 7 explicitly stipulate that the President and Vice President hold office for five years. After that, they can be re-elected in the same position, only for one term of office. This means that the term of office of the president and vice president is only allowed for a maximum of two times. The presidential discourse for these three periods also has the potential to give rise to radicalism which, according to Cross (2013), radicalism in the scope of social and political movements, means a process, practice, or set of beliefs from a non-radical state to become radical. The practice of radicalism is often associated with several tactics and strategies that are outside the scope of acceptable political and religious protest actions, even leading to illegal ones. By using descriptive qualitative research methods, this article tries to describe the potential for radicalism through the hashtags *#presiden3periodand #tandingan3period* on Twitter social media. Using NVIVO's analysis, this article analyzes how much the hashtag is used and discussed through tweets by netizens who threaten radicalism's growth in Indonesia because if this 3-period discourse occurs, there will be an amendment to the 1945 Constitution.

Keywords: Radicalism; politics; social media

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of the current digital era has provided a more interactive space for interaction and communication through social media. Various social media platforms, especially Twitter, can become a communication bridge for the public to express their opinions. This becomes a space for the community to participate in the current democratic system. Furthermore, social media Twitter has also become a platform for political communication because it influences shaping public opinion and facilitating political discussion. Features on Twitter in the form of *tweets hashtags* or hashtags (hashtags) are one of the many ways to participate and contribute to the conversation on social media. Even these hashtags can become a social movement for users on the Twitter social media platform (Schwartz, 2014). Using hashtags on Twitter social media allows users to share information and express opinions about phenomena or conversations with certain trending topics. Users can also interact and involve other people as part of a large conversation about a trending topic, which can potentially create change through social movements (Ibarra, 2015).

Hashtags consist of words or phrases connected to social or political issues and foster a place where discourse can occur. (Carr, 2012) Using hashtags, these groups can communicate, mobilize, and advocate for less visible issues to the mainstream, and even this can be a form of political propaganda. According to Nimmo (Priyadi, 2020), propaganda itself is defined as communication used by an organized group that wants to produce active or passive participation in community action which consists of individuals and is psychologically united through manipulation and combined in an organization. Furthermore, political propaganda is a form of propaganda that involves government efforts, and influential political parties in achieving strategic and tactical goals (Priyadi, 2020). Of course, Twitter's social media through its tweets and hashtags can shape and influence public opinion so that this public opinion then has the potential for radical political movements.

In today's digital era, the world of politics cannot be separated from social media. Political activity is known and controlled by the public through the consumption of news on social media. Social media disseminates political information to the public to increase knowledge, increase insight, raise awareness, and foster a sense of criticism in society (Priyadi, 2020). In recent years, the use of hashtags as a tool for organizing and spreading messages has become popular among Twitter users. One of the hashtags that have caught the attention, especially in Indonesia, is #presiden3Periode, which relates to the debate about extending the presidential term to three terms in Indonesia. Currently, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo has led the Republic of Indonesia for 2 periods, namely the 2014-2019 period and the 2019-2024 period. According to Article 7 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the President and Vice President

hold office for five years, after which they can be re-elected. This means the President can only hold office for two terms based on the Constitution. However, the emergence of the hashtag #presiden3period which wants Jokowi to return can lead this country to make this hashtag a kind of political movement with the potential for political radicalism. The word radicalism here refers to the rise of an extreme political movement even though this movement was carried out indirectly through social media Twitter. Radicalism is related to adhering to extreme ways to achieve goals. Actors of radicalism can be individuals and groups, businessmen, rulers, or their combination (oligarchy), regardless of religion and gender (Lukman, 2022). Webber & Kruglanski (Lukman, 2022) stated that socioeconomic crises often cause radicalism, deformation of political institutions, decreased people's living standards, worsening social harmony and harmony, and fear of the future. In addition, because of the oppression by the authorities or the opposition, ideological disputes, the ambitions of political party leaders, and their orientation towards extreme political means. Although sometimes, under certain socio-political conditions, radicalism can contribute. The digital era properly utilizes the democratic system that provides freedom to express opinions to express their opinions through social media so that these opinions form a view that is considered a form of radical political expression because it will potentially affect the existing Constitution.

The three-term office discourse is an academic debate. Several studies discuss this discourse, such as research conducted by Muhammad Iqbal Khatami regarding Discourse Network Analysis (DNA): Digital Activism in the Debate on the Issue of "Three Periods of President" on Twitter. This article offers a Discourse Network Analysis (DNA) on how digital activism communicates in public debate on the issue of "Three Periods of President" (Khatami, 2022). Rahmat Sahdi Nasution conducted another research regarding the Perceptions of the Bagan Batu Community towards the Three Period Presidential Discourse which had the aim of research to find out the public's response to the three-period presidential discourse, and how the community voiced their opinion about the Constitution being violated. The result was that 53.85% stated Strongly Disagree. Research conducted by Wasisto Raharjo Jati regarding the political radicalism of the Indonesian Muslim Middle Class after the Reformation elaborates further on the emergence of uncivil societal groups in Indonesia.

The definition of uncivil society itself can be interpreted as a form of civil society group that carries out actions contrary to democracy. The problems regarding uncivil society are the excesses of the imperfect process of democratic transition and consolidation. That makes the process of interest articulation become an arena of competition with one another. The implication then is the strengthening of violent behavior aimed at achieving an interest. Besides that, another crucial problem faced in civil society is the fragmentation of ideology, identity, and different interests it gives the impression that the formation of civil society is more elitist. So the emergence of an uncivil

society is the tip of the iceberg towards deepening democracy which has not been completely over in the realm of society (Raharjo Jati, 2017). Various studies have also been examined regarding political radicalism and social media such as Mitchelstein's research on "Minimal Effects, Maximum Panic: Social Media and Democracy in Latin America" in dealing with public discourse about the negative effects that social media might have on democracy in Latin America, this article provides a qualitative assessment of existing scholarship on the uses, actors, and effects of platforms for democratic life.

The findings show that campaigns, collective action, and e-governance are the main uses of political platforms. Second, politicians and officeholders, social movements, news producers, and citizens are the main actors who use them for political gain. Third, these platforms have two main positive effects on the democratic process—enabling social engagement and information diffusion—and two main negative effects—disinformation and the spread of extremism and hate speech (Mitchelstein et al., 2020). Furthermore, the article published by El Mundo entitled " From Bolsonaro to Vox: How WhatsApp has become the most effective weapon of political propaganda" (Terrasa R, 2019) features an image of the late Eva Perón speaking at a rally with the WhatsApp logo superimposed over her face, and platform "read receipts" signs displayed along the demonstrators. A widely circulated New York Times article, "How Youtube Radicalized Brazil," claims that because the system suggests more provocative videos to keep users watching, it can lead them to extreme content they may never find. (Fisher M. & Taub T., 2019).

Sparkes-Vian conducted Subsequent research on "Digital Propaganda: The Tyranny of Ignorance" in which propaganda is closely tied to the nature of communication and communication technology. Mass communication by citizens in the digital age has been heralded to counter elite propaganda; however, it also provides a forum for misinformation, aggression, and hostility. The extremist group Britain First has used Facebook as a way to spread hostility against Muslims, immigrants, and social security claimants in the form of memes, leading to reactions from the site that contradict their message. This article analyzes memetics, which examines persuasion, organization, political echo chambers, and self-correcting online narratives; argues that propaganda can best be understood as an evolving set of techniques and mechanisms that facilitate the spread of ideas and actions. This allows concepts to be adapted to suit changing political and technological landscapes and includes propaganda and counter-propaganda in the context of horizontal communication networks (Sparkes-Vian, 2018).

In the political context, the issue of extending the presidential term into three terms is very sensitive and controversial. The Indonesian Constitution limits the presidential term to only two terms. However, the emergence of hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period on Twitter indicates that some groups or individuals support changing the Constitution to allow the President to serve more than two terms. The

hashtags *#presiden3period* and *#tandingan3period* on Twitter can potentially strengthen radical views regarding extending presidential terms. By understanding the potential for political radicalism that can emerge through the use of this hashtag, educational, regulatory, and collaborative steps must be taken to overcome its negative impact and promote constructive dialogue in the political sphere

2. METHODS

The research method used in this article is a qualitative research method that examines events, phenomena, or human experiences to answer questions about why something happens, how it happens, and what causes it. In this article, the researcher uses a descriptive qualitative research method in which the data is in the form of verbal data, words, or pictures, and not in the form of numbers. The choice of qualitative research method is because in this article a detailed understanding of a process is required or experience is required, or the information provided is in non-numeric form (e.g. in the form of text or visuals). Using content analysis, this study analyzes the interaction phenomenon through social media Twitter. The data processing technique in this article uses NVIVO 14 as software that simplifies the data organization process so that data can be classified neatly. Data processing starts from collecting, categorizing, mapping, analyzing, and visualizing qualitative data obtained from social media Twitter as a data source. (Priyatni et al., 2020). NVIVO 14 then describes the values and results, displays the data through tables and figures, and simplifies and clarifies the reading in the analysis and data sections. (Primary & Qodir, 2022). Using data from social media Twitter via the hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period taken on May 18, 2023, the data captured was 1283 tweets which were then imported to NVIVO 14 and then managed and analyzed using the perspective of political radicalism.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hashtags or hashtags (hashtags) are featured on social media, including Twitter. Hashtags were initially proposed on Twitter by former Google developer Chris Messina in 2007. The invention aimed to create a meta tag that would allow users to track dynamic content related to specific content. event or topic. Since 2007, hashtags have been used to coordinate online conversations, find supporters, and organize protests that allow users to actively participate in social and political movements. (Panko, 2017). Several groups of political elites use this hashtag as political propaganda on an issue. Political propaganda can best be understood as an evolving set of techniques and mechanisms that facilitate the dissemination of ideas and actions. The elites use political propaganda through social media, one of which is Twitter, as a facility to spread ideas and actions which are then responded to by the public, both pros and cons. One of the ideas through that Twitter hashtag as a form of political propaganda that has the potential to form political

radicalism is #president3period and #tandingan3period. This issue also arises because the 2024 election is approaching.
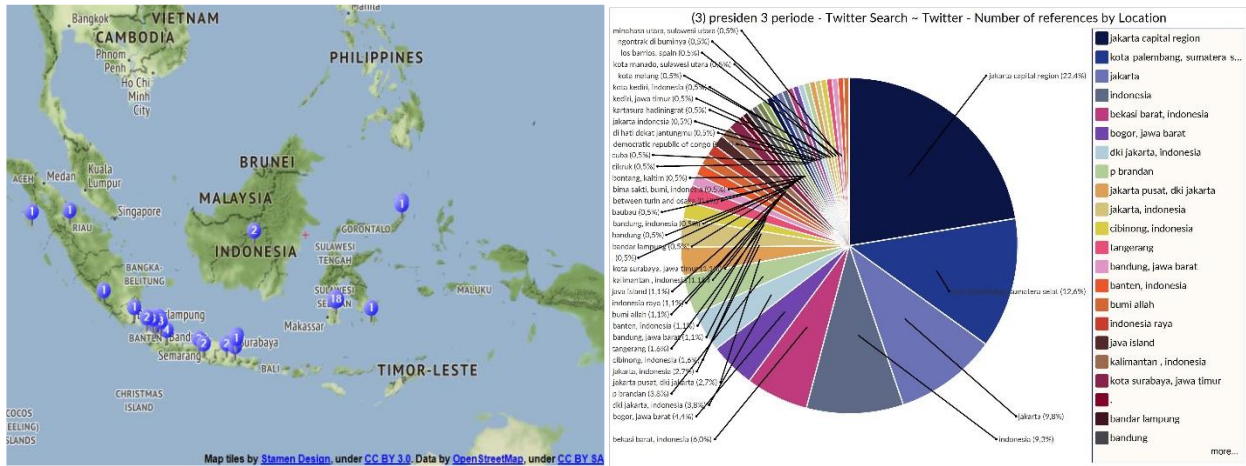
Figure 1. Tweets regarding the President's three periods

This hashtag has pros and cons and has even become a trending topic and viral on social media. A political researcher from the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) Siti Zuhro said the issue of changing the presidential term into three terms arose since the era of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) to President Joko Widodo. The proposal during the SBY era also received widespread rejection from the public so that it ran around, and during the Jokowi era, this issue reappeared and returned to being pros and cons (Kompas.com & Achmad Nasrudin Yahya, 2021).

Figure 2. Hashtag Word Frequency #presiden3period and #jajian3period

Based on findings through NVIVO 14, the hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period are related to the word office at 3.79%, followed by the word period at 3.67%, then the word fail is 2.79%, the word election is 1.97%, the word extension is 1.67 % and Jokowi 1.10%. This hashtag is also related to other hashtags tweeted or retweeted by netizens as follows:

Figure 3. Number of referrals based on hashtags

The reference results show user tweets related to the hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period which can be the reasons for these hashtags to appear. Furthermore, NVIVO 14 can also describe the origin of tweets based on the user's location.

Figure 4. Number of references by location distribution

Based on this distribution, it appears that the most users discussing the hashtags #presiden3period and #juangan3period are in DKI Jakarta at 41.4% (Jakarta Capital Region 22.4%, Jakarta 9.8%, DKI Jakarta 3.8%, Central Jakarta 2.7%, and Jakarta - Indonesia 2.7%, Jakarta Indonesia 0.5) followed by Palembang City with 12.6%, and Indonesia with 9.3%. In addition, based on the user's tweets, the sentiments from the hashtags #presiden3period and #juangan3period are as follows"

Figure 5. Hashtag sentiment analysis #presiden3period and #position3period
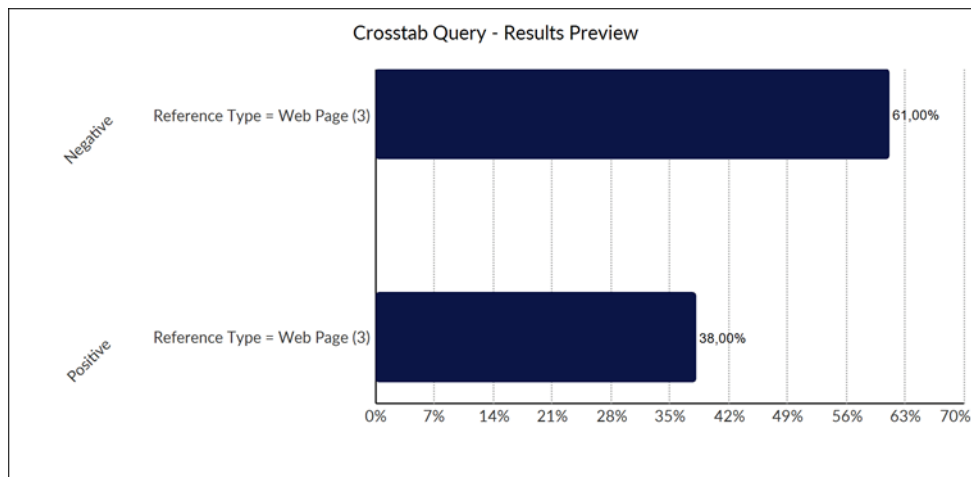
Based on the sentiment analysis query results, it appears that the Hashtag #presiden3period and #tandingan3period raise pros and cons. The hashtag contains 61% negative sentiment and 38% positive sentiment. This means that this hashtag gets more cons than pros from the community. This is because this hashtag can be potential for political radicalism. After all, it can change the existing Constitution.

In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI, 2016), radicalism is defined as an understanding or flow that wants social and political change or renewal by violent or drastic means. Radicalism also has a different assessment of the political situation, namely justifying and even requiring political violence as the only way to change political conditions. According to Cross (2013), Radicalism is as follows: 1) A term within the scope of social and political movements which means a process, practice, or set of beliefs from a non-radical state to become radical. The practice of radicalism is often associated with some tactics and strategies that are outside the scope of acceptable political and religious protest actions, even leading to illegal ones. 2) Radicalism represents the extreme side of the distribution (curve) of acceptable political action and radicalism can involve acts of violence based on belief, not personality. 3) Radicalism can refer to beliefs about the best way to achieve Movement goals (Cross, 2013). Radical beliefs develop a feeling that accepted ways (by society) to change the situation are not enough and extraordinary steps must be taken. Thus it can be concluded that radicalism is an understanding made by a group of schools that want drastic social or political change or renewal by using violent means to achieve changes in political conditions.

The use of hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period on Twitter has the potential to strengthen and broaden radical views regarding extending presidential terms. Some of the potential political radicalism that might occur through this hashtag include:

1. Mass Mobilization: Hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period can be used as a tool to mobilize the masses to support constitutional change. By garnering support via Twitter, groups with radical agendas can organize larger protests or political actions in the real world.

2. Spread of Propaganda: This hashtag can also be used to spread propaganda and radical messages to Twitter users who do not have a sufficient understanding of the Constitution and its political implications. This can strengthen the beliefs of radical groups and influence public opinion.

3. Segregation of Communities: Controversy around extending presidential terms can divide society into dissenting groups. The use of hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period can strengthen political polarization and increase tension between groups in society.

4. Threats to Democracy: If the hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period manage to gain massive popularity, it could open the door for attempts to undermine basic democratic principles, such as the term limits and powers enshrined in the Constitution. This can weaken democratic institutions and threaten the political stability of a country.

There are several steps to be able to overcome the potential for political radicalism through the hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period on Twitter, including (1) Through public education where the Government and related institutions must increase public understanding of the Constitution and basic principles of democracy. Educational campaigns involving social media and other online resources can help tackle misconceptions and the spread of misinformation. Furthermore, through regulation and supervision, the government and social media platforms need to work together to oversee content related to the hashtags #presiden3period and #tandingan3period and other radical efforts. Proper regulation can help reduce the spread of harmful propaganda and content. Finally, collaboration with the community, namely collaboration with civil communities, NGOs, and other community groups is also important in overcoming the potential for political radicalism. Strengthening dialogue between groups and promoting respectful understanding can help defuse tensions and promote inclusive political agreements.

Regarding regulations, the Constitutional Court (MK) rejected the lawsuit to change the presidential term from two to three terms. Legal considerations in the Constitutional Court Decision Number 117/PUU-XX/2022 mutatis mutandis apply to legal considerations in the quo decision. This means that the norms of Article 169 letter n and Article 227 letter i of Law Number 7 of 2017 are constitutional. Article 169 letter n which states that he has never served as president or vice president for two terms of office in the same position is meant to maintain the substance of the norms of Article 7 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (MK *Refuses to Serve President for 3 Periods, Mention No reason yet - News Liputan6.Com*, nd). This regulation is expected to be able to inhibit the potential for political radicalism because the Constitution must indeed be obeyed together so that unconstitutional movements do not occur even through social media.

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