

Hoaxes on Social Media in the Perspective of Hadith

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Abstract

Purpose- This article aims to analyze hoaxes in the social media ecosystem and formulate a hadith-based digital communication ethical framework that is relevant to the contemporary technological context.

Design/Methodology/Approach - This study uses a qualitative method with a literature study approach, by analyzing primary sources in the form of thematic hadiths on communication, honesty, verification, and speaking ethics, as well as secondary sources that discuss hoaxes, social media algorithms, and religious digital literacy.

Findings - The results of the study show that the character of hoaxes on social media is influenced by a combination of technological factors (algorithm of engagement), psychological (impulsivity and cognitive bias), and social (symbolic authority and echo chamber). From the perspective of hadith, the principles of *ṣidq*, *amanah*, *tabayyun*, and *adab al-qawl* have proven to be the foundation in preventing hoaxes and disinformation. However, the application of these principles faces structural obstacles due to the design of digital platforms that prioritize virality over accuracy.

Originality/Value - The novelty of this research lies in the effort to integrate hadith about hoaxes not only at the normative-individual level, but also at the structural level through the concept of internalizing the value of hadith into the design of digital platforms. This article offers a conceptual framework of Islamic digital communication ethics that links the principles of hadith, maqāṣid al-shari'ah, and value-sensitive design approaches as theoretical and practical contributions in the study of hoaxes on social media.

Keywords: Hoaxes, hadith, social media, tabayyun, digital platform design

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I. INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in the digital era has brought great changes in people's social lives. Social media is becoming a new public space that allows people to interact, share information, and form opinions without time and space limits. However, the ease of access to this information also has a negative impact in the form of an increase in the flow of false information or fake news (hoaxes) that spread quickly without verification. Hoaxes not only mislead public opinion, but also cause social unrest, damage harmony, and can even cause divisions in society.

As a religion that is *salih li kulli zaman wa makan*, Islam needs to respond to this phenomenon. In the Islamic perspective, truth (*as-sidq*) and trust are fundamental values in communicating. The Prophet emphasized the importance of honesty and prudence in conveying information, as he said:

عَنْ حَفْصِ بْنِ غَاصِمٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ كَذِبًا أَنْ يُحَدِّثَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعَ (رواه مسلم)

From Hafsh bin Ashim he said: *The Messenger of Allah said: "It is enough for a person (to be considered) to lie when he narrates everything he hears"* (Muslim, 2015). This hadith shows that it is strictly forbidden for a Muslim to spread information without first ascertaining its truth.

The principle of prudence (*tabayyun*) in receiving and conveying news is also affirmed in al-Hujurat [49]: 6:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِمَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحَبُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ لَتَدْمِئْنَ

O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.

Several previous studies have discussed the phenomenon of hoaxes and communication ethics from various Islamic perspectives, including: Mohamad Nuryansah and Muhammad Izzul Haq with the title *Strategi Pencegahan Hoaks dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Hadis*. He highlighted the strategy to prevent the spread of hoaxes by prioritizing the principle of *tabayyun*, not spreading news without understanding its content, and always being aware of the supervision of Allah SWT (Nuryansah dan Haq, 2023). Talalu et al., with the title *Hoaks dan Etika Berkomunikasi: Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Hadis*, emphasizing that hoaxes violate the ethics of *qaulan sadidan* (the right word) as explained in al-Nisa' [4]: 9 and al-Aḥzab [33]: 70. This research relates the value of honesty in communication with the hadith about the importance of telling the truth as the basis of goodness (Talalu et al., 2022). Ahmad Nasuki in his research entitled *Hoaks dalam Perspektif Hadis dan Strategi Penanggulangannya (Integrasi Terhadap Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam)* study hadiths related to lies and slander, and analyze the Prophet Muhammad's strategy in preventing the spread of false news in early Islam through moral and social education (Nasuki, 2022). Mubarok and Hamidah in his study entitled *Etika Berkomunikasi dalam Menyikapi Berita Bohong di Media Sosial Perspektif Al-Qur'an Surat An-Nur* affirms that the Qur'an condemns those who spread hoaxes (Mubarok dan Hamidah, 2022).

Based on the analysis of previous studies, it can be concluded that the study of hoaxes and communication ethics from an Islamic perspective generally focuses on the general principles of truth and honesty, as well as the analysis of verses and hadiths regarding the prohibition of lying. However, this study has differences in several aspects, including: (1) In the aspect of approach, this study specifically focuses on the analysis of the Prophet's hadiths that are directly related to communication ethics and the phenomenon of hoaxes in the context of contemporary social media; (2) In the digital context, this study connects the values of hadith with the phenomenon of modern digital communication, which has not been discussed in depth in previous research; (3) In the aspect of an analytical-integrative approach, this study combines the study of classical hadith with modern communication ethics to produce Islamic communicative guidelines that are applicable to social media users.

In addition, this study has the following objectives: (1) Exploring the views of the Prophet's hadith on the prohibition of spreading hoaxes; (2) Presenting an applicative approach in applying hadith values to build an ethical social media culture based on Islamic morals.

II. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach. This approach is considered relevant to examine social phenomena and ethical values in hadith in depth and contextual. Qualitative-descriptive methods are used so that researchers are able to uncover the patterns, meanings, and interpretations of communication behavior on social media by referring to hadith sources and Islamic literature as well as available empirical data (Moleong, 1989).

The data used consists of two types, namely primary data are the texts of the Prophet's hadith, explanations of scholars, as well as observations of communication behavior on social media and secondary data consisting of scientific journals, Islamic books, articles related to hoaxes and digital communication. Because this research is a literature research, the procedure for obtaining data is taken through literature studies, tracing hadiths that talk about the spread of hoaxes, and the phenomenon of hoaxes on social media. Meanwhile, data analysis techniques are pursued by: (1) Content analysis. It is used to examine the meaning of hadith texts related to hoaxes and communication ethics, as well as analyze content that is categorized as hoaxes on social media; (2) Thematic interpretation. It is used in understanding the moral message of the hadith. Themes such as honesty, *tabayyun*, and oral care were identified and analyzed for their relationship with digital behavior; (3) Critical analysis. Analyze the narrative of hoaxes and communication develops and their impact socially, based on the perspective of hadith and social media dynamics.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Hoax Characters in the Social Media Ecosystem

The hoax phenomenon is a characteristic of digital communication that cannot be separated from the development of social media as the largest public interaction space today. Hoaxes are not simply understood as ordinary lies, but as information constructions that manipulate reality, either through altering context, cutting narratives, or using fabricated visuals. In the modern social media ecosystem, the character of hoaxes is not only determined by the quality of the information, but also by the platform's architecture that facilitates rapid dissemination through likes, reposts, forward chains, and recommendation algorithms. Salsabila's research shows that at least 70% of social media users in

Indonesia are exposed to hoaxes every three months, and about 35% have forwarded messages without verification (Salsabila et al., 2025).

In the study of digital communication, hoaxes are categorized into misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation. All three appear simultaneously on social media due to the open nature of the platform and lack of moderation. Among all types of hoaxes, religious hoaxes are among the most dangerous because they touch the area of moral authority. Information that contains false religious labels, verses, or hadiths tends to be more acceptable without verification because it contains elements of symbolic authority. Muizza emphasized that religious hoaxes are growing rapidly because they take advantage of people's belief in religious symbols, so that even if the content is not true, it is still accepted as truth only because of who is speaking, not what the source is (Ahmad et al., 2024).

The spread of hoaxes cannot be separated from the pattern of information distribution on digital platforms. WhatsApp, for example, allows information to spread privately through a forward chain that is very difficult to trace. This pattern creates an environment that is almost impossible to moderate, as conversations take place in closed spaces. Meanwhile, platforms like TikTok and Instagram are strengthening the circulation of hoaxes through algorithmic amplification mechanisms—algorithms that prioritize content based on engagement, not truth. Hasanah emphasized that content that triggers anger, fear, or surprise is easier to get algorithmic recommendations than educational content, so that religious hoaxes that are sensational have a greater chance of going viral (Hasanah, H., 2024).

In addition to the platform's architecture, user psychological factors also play a role in expanding the spread of hoaxes. Many studies note that confirmation bias is a major driver of content sharing behavior without verification, as users simply want to reinforce the beliefs they already have. In the context of religious hoaxes, the tendency to want to spread kindness is actually a trigger for blind sharing. Rahayu found that many Muslim WhatsApp users in Indonesia do not fully read the religious content they receive, but directly forward it to others because they feel they are doing good deeds (Hasanah, U. dan Busro, 2023).

The social dimension also plays an important role in strengthening the character of digital hoaxes. Social media forms echo chambers—digital echo chambers surrounded by like-minded users. In this space, hoaxes are not only spreading, but also normalized because there is no critical debate or independent verification. Group identities encourage users to trust information that comes from their own community, even if it doesn't make sense. In some cases, religious hoaxes serve to strengthen group boundaries, create polarization between congregations, and escalate identity-based social conflicts.

In addition to identity issues, hoaxes also often use religious authority in a manipulative manner. Many religious hoaxes appear in the form of narratives associated with hadith or fatwa of scholars, even though the content does not have a valid basis. For example, a text in the name of a hadith narrated by Bukhari or Muslim but not found in the original book. This condition is further exacerbated by the lack of hadith literacy among social media users. Al-Farouqy's research shows that the emergence of the phenomenon of social media hadiths has created a new religious authority that lacks scientific legitimacy (Farouqy dan Ridla, 2022).

The social impact of digital hoaxes is also increasingly real. Many cases show that hoaxes can trigger slander, horizontal conflicts, and even mass violence. Religious hoaxes are a modern form of slander that is developed through digital technology. He can accuse someone of being an infidel, spread moral accusations without evidence, or attack a certain group. Muizza underlined that this type of hoax is not only misinformation, but a very serious violation of social ethics because it damages human honor (*hifz al-'ird*) and the unity of the ummah (Ahmad et al., 2024). It is also important to understand that hoaxes not only threaten individuals, but also damage the structure of public trust. When people are often exposed to false religious information on behalf of scholars or hadiths, they eventually become skeptical of the correct religious authority. Salsabila called this phenomenon a crisis of digital authority, which is a condition when anonymous voices on social media are more trusted than scholars who have scientific competence (Salsabila et al., 2025).

Another character of digital hoaxes is their ability to produce a convincing-looking duplication narrative. Many hoaxes are made in a format that resembles da'wah posters, mosque flyers, or lecture pieces, so that they look as if they come from an official institution. This visual form enhances pseudo-credibility. Among digital ethnographic research, it is noted that visual hoaxes are easier to believe than text, especially for users who are not used to verifying images (Elsanita et al., 2024).

All of these phenomena show that hoaxes in the social media ecosystem have a complex character— a combination of technology, psychology, and social dynamics. Hoaxes are not just lies, but a discourse machine that moves through algorithms, cognitive biases, and symbolic authority. Faced with such a character, a technical approach alone is not enough. An ethical framework is needed that is able to reach the moral, spiritual, and social dimensions of communication actions. In this context, hadith offers a foundation of communication ethics that is universal and relevant to the digital world.

Interactive Analysis: The Meeting of Hadith and the Reality of Digital Platforms

The meeting between the teachings of hadith and the reality of digital platforms shows a dynamic that is not simple. On the one hand, the Prophet's hadith offers a set of ethical values that emphasize prudence, honesty, responsibility, and politeness in communicating. On the other hand, social media as a product of modern technology is built on the logic of speed, engagement, and virality. This tension makes the digital space a field of interaction that is prone to clashes of values, especially when Islamic communication ethics are faced with an algorithmic system that does not consider moral and spiritual dimensions.

The hadiths about communication basically teach a reflective attitude and not to be hasty. The *tabayyun* principle, for example, requires a verification and clarification process before information is disseminated. However, the reality of social media encourages the opposite behavior. The share, retweet, or forward feature is designed to minimize the user's thinking time. Information can be disseminated with just one touch, with no room for reflection. In this context, the value of *tabayyun* is directly related to the culture of digital impulsivity. Users often share information not because they have confirmed its truth, but because they are driven by emotion, a sense of urgency, or a desire to be the first to break the news.

In addition to the issue of speed, digital platform algorithms play an important role in shaping the perception of truth. Content that frequently appears on a user's homepage tends to be considered important, relevant, and even correct. This phenomenon has the potential to give birth to the illusion of truth, which is a condition when information that repeatedly appears is considered valid even though the substance is wrong. From the point of view of the hadith, this situation is very problematic because the truth is not determined by the popularity or frequency of its spread, but rather by the honesty of the source and the validity of the content. This shows that algorithmic logic that prioritizes user engagement often contradicts the *ṣidq* principle that places truth as the primary value.

عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصِّدْقِ فَإِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ

Hold on to honesty, for honesty leads to goodness (Al-Tirmizi, 2015).

Another dimension that reinforces these tensions is the shift in authority in religious communication. In the hadith tradition, scientific authority is built through the sanad, competence, and moral integrity of the narrator. However, on social media, authority is often determined by the number of followers, the level of virality, and visual appeal. As a result, figures who do not have scientific competence can appear as religious references simply because the content is popular. This shift opens up ample space for the spread of false hadiths, twisted quotes, or religious advice taken out of context. From the perspective of hadith, this condition shows a crisis of trust in digital communication, because religious information is conveyed without scientific responsibility. In fact, the Prophet stated that people who are not trustworthy are considered unbelievers.

لَا يُؤْمِنُ لِمَنْ لَا أَمَانَةَ لَهُ

Not (considered) a believer who does not have the nature of trust (Hanbal, 1998).

The interaction between hadith and social media can also be read through communication patterns that develop in the comment column and online discussion rooms. Social media is often an arena for heated debate, mutual reproach, and hate speech, even on religious issues. This is contrary to the ethics of *adab al-qawl* taught by the Prophet, which demands the use of good language or choosing to remain silent when speech has the potential to cause harm.

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكَلِّمْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him say good or be silent (Al-Bukhari, 2015).

This reality shows that the ethical challenge of digital communication lies not only in the content of information, but also in the way users respond and respond to the information. In many cases, hoaxes are not only spread, but also amplified through emotional and provocative comments.

The visual aspect of digital communication also complicates the question. Many religious hoaxes are packaged in the form of da'wah posters, infographics, or video clips of lectures that look convincing. These kinds of visuals give an authoritative and religious impression, so users are more likely to believe them without verification. In the context of the hadith, this reminds us of the warning that the *ummah* should not be deceived by a charming outward appearance, but still test the truth of the substance. This challenge shows that *tabayyun* in the digital age is not enough to be done on text, but must also include visual verification and multimedia context.

The meeting of hadith and the reality of digital platforms also shows the problem of accountability. Many users feel not fully responsible for the information they disseminate due to the anonymous and collective nature of social media. Information is often shared under the pretext of simply forwarding or

simply reminding, without the awareness that the action has social consequences. In the hadith, the principle of trust affirms that every human word and action has a moral responsibility. When this mandate is ignored, digital communication turns into a means of spreading confusion and slander.

From a psychological perspective, social media strengthens the human tendency to react emotionally. Many religious hoaxes are designed to trigger excessive fear, anger, or sympathy. These emotions encourage users to act quickly without thinking. Hadith, on the other hand, teaches self-control, calmness, and patience in responding to information. The tension between digital emotional impulses and self-control ethics in the hadith shows that the hoax problem is not only a problem of lack of knowledge, but also a weak management of emotions in the digital space.

In this interactive analysis, it becomes clear that the values of hadith have not lost their relevance in the era of social media. Quite the opposite, the reality of digital platforms shows the urgency of these values. The principle of *sidq* is necessary to counter the logic of virality that obscures the truth. The *tabayyun* principle is needed to withstand the flow of information that moves too fast. The principle of trust is important to foster a sense of responsibility for every information disseminated. Meanwhile, *adab al-qawl* is a moral buffer so that digital communication does not turn into an arena of conflict and hostility.

On the other hand, this analysis also shows that the application of hadith ethics on social media cannot be imposed entirely on individual users. Platform structure, algorithm design, and digital culture have a major influence on communication behavior. Therefore, hadith ethics need to be understood not only as personal moral demands, but also as a framework of values that can inspire systemic changes in communication technology. Without the support of a conducive structure, hadith values will be difficult to internalize consistently in social media practices. The meeting between hadith and the reality of digital platforms reveals two important things. First, the hadith provides a relevant ethical foundation to respond to the challenges of hoaxes and disinformation on social media. Second, the reality of digital platforms demands reinterpretation and the development of new strategies so that these values can be applied effectively.

Internalizing Hadith Ethics into the Realm of Digital Platform Design

The discussion of communication ethics from the perspective of hadith cannot stop at the individual normative level, but needs to be expanded to the structural and systemic level, namely the design of the digital platform itself. Social media is not just a neutral space where humans communicate, but a technological system that actively shapes the behavior, preferences, and interaction patterns of its users. Therefore, the internalization of hadith ethics into the realm of digital platform design is an important step so that the values of *sidq*, *amanah*, *tabayyun*, and *adab al-qawl* are not just personal moral demands, but also integrated into the technological architecture used daily. This approach is in line with the idea of value-sensitive design (VSD) which emphasizes that moral values must be integrated from the technology design stage (Friedman et al., 2017).

In an Islamic perspective, the integration of values into social and technological systems has a strong foundation in *maqasid al-shari'ah*. The purpose of sharia is not only to regulate individual behavior, but also to maintain the social order to bring benefits. In the context of digital communication, hoaxes and disinformation clearly threaten *hifz al-'aql* (protection of reason) because it creates confusion and misinformation error, and *hifz al-'ird* (protection of honor) because it often triggers slander and defamation. Therefore, integrating hadith ethics into the design of digital platforms can be understood as a collective effort to realize the maqasid. Al-Farouqy emphasized that hadith ethics has great potential to be developed as an institutional ethical framework, not just a guide to personal morals (Farouqy dan Ridla, 2022).

One of the concrete forms of internalizing hadith ethics in platform design is the application of the *tabayyun* principle as ethical friction in the flow of information sharing. Today, many platforms make it easy for users to share content with just one touch, without reflective pauses. In fact, the hadith emphasizes caution and the prohibition of hasty in conveying news. The *tabayyun* principle can be translated into design features such as read-before sharing alerts, source verification notifications, or a cooling-off period before sensitive content is shared. Hasanah's research shows that the addition of a verification alert feature to religious content can reduce the blind sharing rate by up to 28% in a limited trial (Hasanah, H., 2024).

In addition to *tabayyun*, the principle of trust can be internalized through a design that emphasizes transparency and accountability of information sources. In the hadith tradition, the validity of a narration is determined by the clarity of the *sanad* and the credibility of the narrator. This analogy can be applied in social media through the source credibility badge feature, labeling of official accounts of religious institutions, and tracing the origin of content (traceability). Thus, users not only see the content of the message, but also know who is delivering it and where the information comes from. Rahmawan et al., noted that source labeling on MAFINDO verified WhatsApp content significantly increased users' prudence in redistributing messages (Rahmawan et al., 2024).

The *sidq* principle also has important implications in algorithm design. So far, digital platform algorithms have tended to prioritize content based on user engagement, rather than accuracy or truthfulness. This is contrary to the ethics of the hadith which places honesty as the main value. Internalizing *sidq* requires an adjustment of algorithmic logic to not only count the number of clicks, but also to consider the validity of the content. Pennycook and Rand's study shows that ethically uncorrected algorithms have the potential to create an illusory truth effect, which is a condition when information that appears frequently is considered true even though it is wrong (Pennycook dan Rand, 2021).

In addition, *adab al-qawl* or speaking ethics can be translated into a content moderation system that is sensitive to religious and cultural contexts. The Prophet's hadith expressly prohibits abusive speech, reproach, and insults, as he said: "A believer is not a person who likes to reproach and speak dirty" (Al-Tirmizi, 2015). Sanityastuti emphasized that ethics-based moderation—not just censorship—is more effective in creating healthy religious discussion spaces on social media (Sanityastuti et al., 2024). Internalizing hadith ethics into platform design also requires collaboration across actors, including technology developers, academics, scholars, and community members. Scholars and scholars of hadith can act as providers of ethical frameworks and verifiers of religious content, while platform developers are tasked with translating these values into an applicable technical system. This collaborative model is important so that the ethics of hadith are not understood symbolically, but actually affect the user experience.

Furthermore, the internalization of hadith ethics can also be realized through the development of an operational framework that combines Islamic values with technological practices. The *tabayyun-amanah* Framework, for example, can be used as a feature design guide and platform policies. This framework includes the stages of content identification, source verification, social impact evaluation, and ethical decision-making before distribution. This kind of approach is not only relevant for technology companies, but also for digital da'wah institutions, mosque social media managers, and Islamic educational institutions. In terms of public policy, the integration of hadith ethics in the design of digital platforms also has important implications. States and regulatory agencies can encourage platforms to be more responsible in managing religious content, without infringing on freedom of expression. The principles of hadith can be a source of alternative value that complements a positive legal approach in dealing with hoaxes. In the context of Indonesia, where the majority of the population is Muslim, an approach based on religious values has the potential to be more culturally and socially acceptable than a purely repressive approach.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes that the phenomenon of hoaxes on social media is not just a technical problem of digital communication, but an epistemic, moral, and social problem that has a wide impact on religious and community life. Hoaxes, especially those in the name of religion, are growing rapidly in the social media ecosystem supported by engagement algorithms, a culture of impulsivity, and weak verification literacy among users. Hoax characters that utilize religious symbols, convincing visuals, and emotional narratives make them easy to accept and spread, even by well-intentioned individuals. This condition shows that the problem of hoaxes cannot be solved by a legal or technological approach alone, but requires a solid and contextual ethical framework.

An interactive analysis between the hadith and the reality of digital platforms shows a structural tension between Islamic ethical values and the design of social media technologies that tend to prioritize speed, virality, and emotional engagement. Platform algorithms that are not sensitive to truth have the potential to reinforce the illusory truth effect, so that information that often appears is considered true even if it is false. In this context, the implementation of the principles of *tabayyun* and *sidq* faces obstacles not only in the level of user awareness, but also in the architecture of the digital system itself.

Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of internalizing hadith into the realm of digital platform design. This approach includes the application of *tabayyun*-based ethical friction, transparency of sources as a form of trust, algorithmic correction that considers the validity of the content, and language moderation that reflects the *adab al-qawl*. The integration of hadith values in technological design is in line with *maqasid al-shari'ah*, especially in maintaining reason, honor, and social order. By making hadith a source of value in digital communication, social media has the potential to be directed to become a more civilized, responsible, and beneficial public space for the people.

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