



Bubble Echo Chamber Effects Phenomenon in the 2024 Indonesia Regional Head Elections

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Abstract

The accelerating processes of globalization and democratization have transformed national security dynamics. National security encompasses a state's capacity to defend itself against internal and external threats. The emergence of social media, driven by advancements in internet technology, plays a significant role in influencing the political landscape. However, the growing dependence on social media platforms has given rise to the phenomenon of the echo chamber effect, where individuals are increasingly exposed to content that reinforces their pre-existing beliefs, exacerbating polarization, which has the potential to heighten political tensions and trigger social fragmentation, particularly during electoral cycles. This study focuses on Indonesia's 2024 Regional Head Elections, analyzing how the echo chamber effect may threaten national cohesion. Using a qualitative approach, data was collected through observational techniques and an extensive literature review. The study analyzes information patterns on social media, identifies emerging conflict triggers, and proposes relevant preventive measures. Key findings highlight the importance of government intervention in monitoring social media platforms and enhancing public digital literacy. The recommended strategic policies include AI-based monitoring, forming expert-led rapid response teams, and strengthening regulations to manage content exacerbating polarization. Collaboration among stakeholders, including the government, private sector, and civil society, is crucial in mitigating social fragmentation caused by information polarization. This study also advocates implementing national digital literacy initiatives to counter disinformation and polarization. Therefore, this research provides valuable insights into safeguarding national security amidst growing digital threats while supporting the sustainability of democratic processes in Indonesia.

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INTRODUCTION

The echo chamber phenomenon has become crucial in discussing the fragile relationship between globalization and national security (Ezeja, 2024). The echo chamber occurs when internet users with preferences for certain topics are grouped to interact more frequently with individuals who share similar interests (Terren & Borge, 2021). This effect simplifies information-seeking, making it easier for users to find groups that align with their views, but it also leads to a narrowing of individual perspectives on broader issues (Flaxman et al., 2016). In Indonesia, where internal tensions often mark social and political issues, the filter bubble and echo chamber phenomena have become increasingly relevant, especially as digital platforms serve as the primary arena for political discourse.

From the national security perspective, the echo chamber functions as a mechanism that exacerbates social fragmentation and increases societal polarization. This polarization threatens social cohesion, a key pillar of Indonesia's national security framework (Esparza & Bruneau, 2019). When information circulating in cyberspace only reinforces pre-existing beliefs, society tends to ignore alternative perspectives. This results in polarization that can worsen political and social tensions, amplifying the potential for internal conflicts, often challenging for developing countries like Indonesia (Yoga et al., 2023). The echo chamber phenomenon becomes particularly significant in elections, such as regional head elections (*Pilkada*), which refers to the regional head elections in Indonesia. It is a democratic process where citizens vote to elect leaders for regional government positions at the provincial and district levels, such as governors, mayors, and regents. *Pilkada* is held to ensure that the public has a direct role in selecting their local leaders. It typically takes place every five years, and manipulated or selectively disseminated information can influence public opinion and worsen political polarization. Although the echo chamber effect may enrich knowledge within a closed circle, its long-term impact on social cohesion and national stability can pose a serious threat, especially in developing nations like Indonesia (Nguyen, 2020).

In the digital age, the echo chamber phenomenon also presents an opportunity for political strategies during elections, enhancing popularity and building credibility during the electoral period. According to the Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia (2024), as of 2023, the number of internet users in Indonesia has reached 221,563,479 users, representing a significant portion of the total population of 278,696,200 users. According to the results of the 2024 Indonesian internet penetration survey released by APJI (The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association, an organization that oversees internet service providers in Indonesia), Indonesia's internet penetration rate has reached 79.5%. Compared to the previous period, this represents a 1.4% increase. Obama's success in maximizing social media as a campaign tool Balart et al., (2022) is often regarded as the trigger for the widespread adoption of social media in political campaigns. This strategy was also utilized in the 2014 Indonesian presidential campaigns of Jokowi and Prabowo, where the 2014 election campaign significantly contributed to the rise in social media penetration (Firmansyah et al., 2017). The success of Donald Trump in defeating Hillary Clinton in the 2016 U.S. presidential election serves as another illustration of how algorithms can affect the results of the democratic process (Bender, 2022).

The 2017 Jakarta regional head election marked a period of significant polarization and division. Beginning in mid-2016, social media became saturated with diverse political viewpoints, misinformation, and hoaxes (Baptiste et al., 2018). The conflicts that occurred before and after the 2017 Jakarta regional head election were fueled by the

power of social media. Demonstrations and the criminalization of figures were massive sentiments spread through social media (Sugiharto, 2017), and the 2019 presidential election further exacerbated massive movement through negative social media narratives. In the 2019 presidential election, social media played a significant role in influencing the image and popularity of the candidates (Jokowi and Prabowo) during the campaign period. The election ended in disputes between the two camps, triggering mass protests on May 21-22, 2019, rejecting the election results and demanding the rejection of the election commission's decision. This incident resulted in 6 deaths, more than 700 injuries, 200 arrests, and damage to public facilities in the capital (Anugrah, 2019). Data from the Indonesian General Elections Commission (KPU RI) on May 7, 2019, recorded 456 deaths among the Voting Organizing Group (KPPS) and 4,310 illnesses, showing a significant increase compared to the 2014 election (Singgih, 2024).

The echo chamber effect phenomenon during the political year of the 2019 General Election led to the rise of various issues that posed a threat to the unity of Indonesia, such as the spread of political hoaxes, issues related to ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (SARA), as well as hate speech, all of which can weaken national resilience, foster national disintegration, and endanger the unity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) (Saaida, 2023). Furthermore, the phenomenon leading up to the 2020 regional elections revealed that 67% of hoaxes spread was related to political issues (Tamtomo, 2022). More specifically, hoaxes were dominated by false content (34 %), manipulated content (23.4 %), misleading content (21.3 %), incorrect content (17 %), fabricated content (2.1%), and satirical content (2.1 %) (Satriawan, 2020). This situation coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, during which a prolonged debate occurred on social media regarding the continuation of the 2020 regional elections (Alfajri et al., 2019).

According to a survey conducted by Databoks, 51.2 % of respondents agreed to postpone the 2020 regional elections (Pusparisa, 2020). This led to a low voter participation rate in the 2020 Pilkada in Indonesia, reflecting the phenomenon of "*golput*" (white group, which refers to nonvoting behavior). Nonvoting behavior generally refers to an individual's absence in elections due to a lack of motivation. Voters often employ such abstention as a form of protest against the government, political parties, and other democratic institutions (Asfar, 2004), which indicates public dissatisfaction with the democratic process. In several cities, such as Depok, South Tangerang, Surabaya, and Medan, the *golput* votes were much higher than the winning votes. The high *golput* rate was seen as a form of protest against holding the elections during the pandemic and a lack of trust in candidates who were perceived to represent the interests of the elites rather than the hopes of the people (Prabowo, 2020). The echo chamber phenomenon played a significant role in shaping public opinion during this event.

The implementation of the 2024 Regional Head Elections indicates a potential for conflict in the organization of public debates, with several incidents of unrest involving supporters of candidate pairs. Although the General Election Commission (KPU) stated that most debates were conducted in a conducive manner, the fact that around 15 debates were marked by violence and tension, such as in North Sumatra, Aceh, and South Sulawesi, highlights the challenges in maintaining order and neutrality during these processes. These incidents suggest a more significant potential for disruptions to local democratic processes (Muhid, 2024). In Indonesia, social media users' interest in discussing politics is relatively high. A Tirto survey conducted on July 4-5, 2023, with 1,500 respondents, revealed that 46.07 % of social media users are moderately interested in political information, 15.80 % are interested, and 12.07 % are highly interested.

Meanwhile, 22.93 % of social media users expressed no interest in political information (Amin, 2023). Social media, predominantly used by election participants, has thus become the most effective campaign tool.

The efficiency of the internet as a campaign medium during elections is one of the reasons why internet-based campaigns are expected to play a significant role again in the 2024 Regional Elections. A study by Dania & Nisa (2024) indicates that in the 2024 presidential candidate election, social media plays a significant role in political participation. Additionally, the influence of filter bubbles and the polarization of opinions on social media limits voters' access to diverse perspectives. Furthermore, research by Aditya (2023) highlights that the polarization of opinions on social media has intensified as the 2024 general election approaches, which could lead to national disintegration. The reality of using social media as a campaign tool also heightens the potential for conflict leading up to the 2024 regional elections. The echo chamber effect phenomenon poses the risk of creating a post-truth condition, which may trigger black campaigns, polarization, hoaxes, hate speech, and even political propaganda, all of which can threaten national security both before and after the 2024 Regional Elections. The echo chamber phenomenon, where individuals are only exposed to information that reinforces their own views, narrows perspectives that deepen societal polarization. This condition heightens the risk of conflict escalation at various levels, ranging from verbal disputes to physical confrontations (Jiang et al., 2021).

In the context of the 2024 Pilkada, the government is responsible for ensuring that various military and non-military threats are anticipated and managed effectively to maintain state stability. These threats extend beyond physical attacks or military invasions; they also encompass increasingly relevant non-traditional threats in the modern era, such as disinformation, social polarization, and political tensions exacerbated by social media (Mardiatillah et al., 2018). In preparation for the 2024 Regional Head Elections (*Pilkada*), the potential for conflict has become increasingly prominent due to the phenomenon of echo chambers and political tensions spreading across social media (Gupta & Bansal, 2024).

The government plays a crucial role in preventing and mitigating potential negative impacts. A comprehensive preventive strategy is essential, encompassing information monitoring, promoting digital literacy, and policies to reduce potential conflict. Furthermore, civil society organizations play a vital role in raising awareness and facilitating dialogue among diverse groups (Umar, 2013). Technology companies, particularly social media platforms, also bear significant responsibility for managing the digital impacts of social (Otieno, 2024). The importance of digital literacy and platform monitoring in preventing conflicts and mitigating the effects of echo chambers has become increasingly evident, given the influence of social media on public opinion and its potential to spark social tensions. Digital literacy focuses on individuals' ability to access, critically analyze, and responsibly use information (Mundt et al., 2018). Collaboration between governments and technology companies to build real-time content monitoring infrastructure can be a key measure in preventing conflict escalation (Sarkar & Ghosh, 2024).

Research on the phenomenon of echo chambers has been conducted by several experts, including Sunstein (2001), who examined the impact of echo chambers on social polarization, and Bakshy et al. (2015), who investigated the influence of social media algorithms on the spread of information that triggers tensions. Additionally, research by Friggeri et al. (2014) highlighted how false information can spread rapidly on social media platforms, exacerbating social conflicts. However, this study will focus on a more

specific issue, namely the 2024 Regional Head Elections (*Pilkada*) in Indonesia, and the implementation of a more practical and integrated approach, including enhancing public digital literacy and cross-sector collaboration between the government, civil society, technology companies, and the media. This study also focuses on identifying preventive strategies that can be applied to prevent the escalation of conflicts before they develop into major crises. It also provides concrete recommendations in the context of local politics, such as the *Pilkada*.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research type. The qualitative research method investigates natural object conditions where the researcher is the key instrument (Rachman et al., 2024). Qualitative descriptive research aims to describe and illustrate existing phenomena, whether natural or human-engineered, with more attention to the characteristics, quality, and relationships between activities (Sukmadinata, 2016). The data collection techniques used are observation and literature study (Rachman et al., 2024). Observations were conducted to understand the formation of echo chambers in the context of elections. The platforms observed included major social media networks with large user bases and high levels of interaction, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The sampling method was purposive, processing data from official institutional publications on relevant topics.

A literature review is a data collection technique conducted by examining books, literature, records, and reports relevant to the research Nazir (2013), specifically on conflict prevention in the context of the echo chamber phenomenon during the 2024 regional elections. Sources are identified based on the relevance of their content to the research topic and the alignment of their publication dates with recent developments. Each source is evaluated for its contribution to understanding the phenomenon and developing the theoretical framework. The analysis in this study will objectively and systematically examine the relationship between relevant texts (Syawie & Sumarno, 2015). A thematic coding framework will be employed to identify patterns, themes, and relationships within the data. The qualitative data analysis process will be conducted manually to ensure transparency and ease in presenting the research conclusions (Lochmiller, 2021). The thematic coding framework will be developed based on the literature review and initial observations.

This study prioritizes ethical considerations regarding privacy and data protection in social media observations. The data collected includes only public information and does not disclose users' personal identities. The researcher acknowledges that their role as the key instrument may influence data collection and analysis. To address this, data triangulation will be conducted using various sources to ensure objective analysis. The researcher also reflects on personal assumptions and positionality that could affect data interpretation and regularly evaluates the methods employed to ensure the integrity of the research findings. Data collection and specific analysis using a dynamic conflict framework will formulate conflict prevention into appropriate indicators to address the echo chamber effect phenomenon in elections. This study will dissect and analyze various literature as interconnected components. Therefore, this research aims to fulfill the complex reconstruction of conflict prevention in the context of elections.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Echo Chamber Phenomenon and Regional Elections

Following the presidential and legislative elections, the series of democratic elections in Indonesia will continue with the simultaneous Regional Head Elections (*Pilkada*) 2024, organized by the General Elections Commission (KPU). *Pilkada* is regulated by Law Number 6 of 2020 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents, and Mayors, and its implementation is entrusted to the KPU as the main organizer, with the assistance of the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu). Although these elections are regional in scope, the potential for conflict in the digital space cannot be avoided (Ismail, 2019).

In a survey conducted by We Are Social on internet users, the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 213 million as of January 2023. This number is equivalent to 76.3% of Indonesia's total population. This indicates that almost all voters in the 2024 *Pilkada* are internet users who will be subject to the bubble echo chamber effect (Annur, 2023). The negative impact of the bubble echo chamber phenomenon is also influenced by the habit of internet users not verifying the accuracy of circulating news. According to research by Tirto.id, 59% of news links on social media are not actually clicked, 53% use social media as their primary source of information, and 57% of internet users use news aggregators (Adam, 2017).

Social media plays a crucial role in circulating ideas about public policy and politics, becoming an integral part of the nation's daily social and economic life. It serves as a natural channel for publicizing political visions and missions and garnering support for parties and candidates (Hui, 2020). However, social media platforms have increasingly been involved in manipulative disinformation campaigns in recent decades. The use of social media can negatively impact national security and harm national interests. Political propaganda disseminated through these platforms can divide communities, create factions, and foster intergroup tensions. For states, this threatens policymaking processes and democracy (Agung, 2018). In the context of modern or emerging warfare, the evolution of the digital world has given rise to various terms such as hybrid warfare, cyber warfare, information warfare, netwar, and others (Soewardi, 2013). The dissemination of information through phenomena like filter bubbles, echo chambers, and the post-truth era has spread provocative content and news, escalating the potential for societal conflict—particularly as the nation approaches the 2024 regional elections (*Pilkada*).

For example, the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election was marked by an intense social media war and an increasing polarization between supporters of President Jokowi and his challenger, Prabowo Subianto. These groups were frequently engaged in hate speech exchanges, characterized by terms such as "*cebong*" and "*kampret*," which initially began as jokes but eventually became symbols of division. This polarization deepened the hostility between the two camps. The post-election impact was tumultuous, culminating in disputes that triggered mass protests on May 21–22, 2019. These protests resulted in serious consequences, including six deaths, over 700 injuries, approximately 200 arrests, and significant damage to public facilities in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia (Anugrah, 2019). This illustrates the destructive potential of polarization and digital disinformation in escalating tensions during crucial political events.

In the context of regional elections (*Pilkada*), the International Crisis Group (ICG) noted that about 10 % of the 200 regional head and deputy head elections held throughout 2017 were marred by acts of violence. Examples include Mojokerto in East Java, Tana Toraja in South Sulawesi, and Toli-Toli in Central Sulawesi. The ICG stated that

violence in Pilkada was often triggered by the weak position of election organizers, such as the district/city General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Board (Panwaslu) (Kusuma, 2019). Analyzing these events reveals several sources of horizontal conflict that escalated into violence. These conflicts were largely caused by dissatisfaction among support groups for certain candidate pairs. In cases of rejection and protest narratives, support groups often carry out their actions through social media (Bene, 2017).

Social media is considered the most effective platform for gathering protest support against an event. Nowadays, social media timelines on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Path, Twitter, and others are often filled with posts, whether by celebrities, institutions, or ordinary individuals with millions of followers, about an event or product/service. The Independent Journalists Alliance (AJI) found that from September 1, 2023, to January 2024, a total of 182,118 texts out of 678,106 contained hate speech, with 61,340 texts directly related to election issues (Jurnalists Independen Indonesia, 2024). The complexity of these conflicts is partly rooted in the character of Indonesian society itself. The fragmented social structure, where each group has a strong base, seems incompatible with the logic of the Pilkada system as envisioned by policymakers. Viewed through the lens of such a pluralistic society, Pilkada cannot be seen merely as a matter of recruiting regional leaders; more than that, Pilkada touches on the 'life and death' of a community (Oktama Andriyendi & Fitria Dewi, 2023).

Stages of Conflict Escalation and Influence of Echo Chamber Phenomenon in Regional Elections

In the 2024 Regional Head Elections (Pilkada), the polarization of dissatisfaction with election results was demonstrated through numerous legal challenges to the election outcomes. The Election and Democracy Association recorded 312 election result lawsuits filed with the Constitutional Court (Purnamasari, 2024). Moreover, conflict was detected from the outset of the candidate debates, particularly in the debates for the gubernatorial elections of North Sumatra (Sumut) and South Sulawesi (Sulsel). These debates led to alleged violence and clashes between candidates' supporters (Muhid, 2024). In the context of conflict, social media plays a significant role in triggering tensions and the development of conflict.

In the development of conflict, Glasl divides conflict escalation into three phases, each consisting of three stages. In the first phase, the disputing parties still prioritize dialogue and rational behavior in dealing with the dispute. The second phase involves the formation of alliances, attacks on reputation, and the use of threats. In the third phase, the conflict reaches its peak with direct destructive attacks, leading to total destruction for all parties involved (Glasl, 1997). Each phase demonstrates an increase in the intensity of the conflict, and it is crucial to recognize the sources of conflict to prevent it from escalating. To comprehensively understand the sources of conflict, it is essential to define the core of the critical situation or the main issues and causes of the conflict by observing and understanding the conflict actors involved (Malik, 2017). Analyzing conflict offers a conflict mapping and analysis model called the Dynamic Framework for Conflict Prevention and Resolution, as seen in Figure 1.

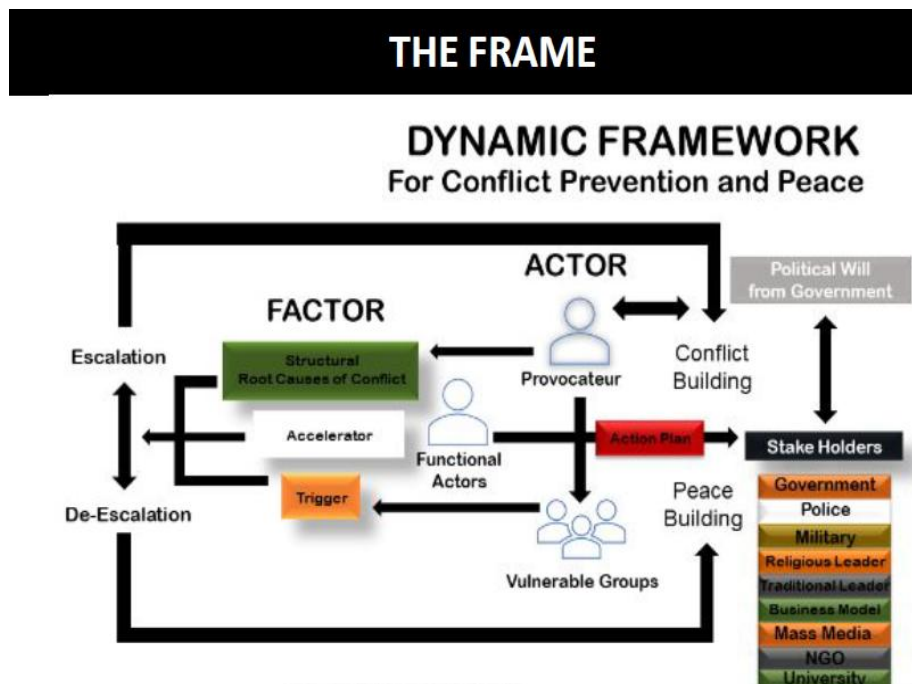


Figure 1. Dynamic Framework for Conflict Prevention (Malik, 2017)

In the conflict mapping and analysis model, at least five main elements must be analyzed: conflict escalation and de-escalation elements, conflict causative factors, conflict actors, stakeholders, and political policies. These five main elements are interrelated as a dynamic system for conflict prevention because each element influences the others. The echo chamber phenomenon can significantly influence the elements of conflict escalation and de-escalation in the context of regional elections. This phenomenon, often resulting from filter bubbles, creates an environment where individuals are exposed only to information that aligns with their views, ignoring or blocking different perspectives (Rhodes, 2021). In the digital space, algorithms group users with similar interests, creating homogenous information circles and ultimately giving rise to the echo chamber phenomenon (Kim, 2023). The echo chamber phenomenon will cause controversy to become fundamental for recognizing echo chambers, understood as groups of polarized individuals. The higher the controversy between members of different groups and the homogeneity among members of the same group, the higher the likelihood of existing within an echo chamber bubble, identified as a condition of binary polarization (i.e., two highly polarized groups of individuals) (Bright, 2016).

Although the echo chamber phenomenon often exacerbates conflicts, several de-escalation approaches can mitigate its negative impact and help ease tensions. These include digital peace campaigns or national campaigns that promote social media ethics and the importance of information diversity (Cinelli et al., 2021). Developing programs that encourage cross-group discussions can also facilitate compromise and reduce tensions that may arise from extreme views reinforced by echo chambers (Kelly, 2021). Additionally, increasing media literacy among voters is a crucial step to counter the effects of echo chambers. Education on how information is selected and presented on social media can help voters identify and avoid biased information and strengthen their ability to evaluate the truthfulness of the news they receive (Ginés et al., 2024).

The second element relates to factors that drive conflict, starting from the digital space where polarization occurs due to the tendency of supporters of election candidates

to classify themselves into specific groups, leading to labels such as “*Cebong-Kampret*” affiliations among candidate supporters (Tazri, 2019). In social identity theory, the effort by a group member to elevate their position and their group’s position is the beginning of conflict. Based on social identity theory, Tajfel and Turner (2004) argue that prejudice usually occurs due to in-group favoritism, which is the tendency to discriminate by giving better or more favorable treatment to the in-group over the out-group. Group behavior occurs due to two important processes: cognitive and motivational.

Cognitive and motivational processes can reinforce individuals’ tendencies to discriminate between in-groups and out-groups through social media platforms, online forums, and other digital communities. In the digital space, like-minded views are continually reinforced without challenge, which can strengthen biases and prejudices (Kozyreva et al., 2020). The digital space also amplifies group differences because individuals can express their identities and views openly. These differences are more readily visible and can trigger reactions from other groups. Cognitive processes lead individuals to categorize various stimuli they encounter, including the groups they meet, causing individuals to view others as in-group or out-group members (Sirola et al., 2021). Identity politics is often considered effective in general and local elections because it can mobilize voters by building awareness of the majority identity. Conflict actors then exploit this situation to win elections without considering the risk of division among supporters (Danugroho, 2024).

The filter bubble is an effective condition for building narratives of solidarity support. To date, there are no legal provisions related to the use of identity politics, so preventing conflict actors is often misguided. Establishing monitoring systems and quick response teams can be crucial in facing potential conflicts in such situations (Mittelstadt et al., 2016). By developing AI-based systems, real-time monitoring of trends and potential conflict escalation in the digital space can provide a comprehensive picture of the evolving socio-political dynamics. This system can identify communication patterns that may trigger conflicts and predict hot spots requiring immediate attention to identify conflict actors (Zhao et al., 2024). In December 2023, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) released a publication titled “A Role for AI in Peacebuilding: Peacebuilders Should Harness Technology for Uses That Range From Monitoring Cease-Fire Violations to Online Hate Speech.” This publication highlights the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in peacebuilding efforts (Ashby, 2023).

In Indonesia, for example, the government could implement an AI-based early warning system to monitor hate speech and disinformation on social media platforms, enabling a rapid response to prevent conflict escalation. By integrating machine learning into the national security framework, authorities could analyze social media patterns to detect early signs of conflict. This would allow timely interventions, such as community dialogue or awareness campaigns, to reduce polarization. The application of monitoring systems and digital literacy could be developed by establishing an Integrated Cyber Monitoring Center (ICMC) that integrates AI technology with existing national security systems (Mahapatra et al., 2022). This system could be implemented by adopting a multi-stakeholder approach involving collaboration between the National Cyber and Encryption Agency (BSSN), the Ministry of Communication and Information, and higher education institutions to develop machine learning-based early detection algorithms tailored to Indonesia’s socio-cultural context. Operationally, this system could be strengthened by forming regional rapid response teams tasked with responding to potential conflict threats in real-time.

To optimize the effectiveness of this system, forming quick response teams becomes essential. These teams can consist of communication experts, social psychologists, and cybersecurity specialists who can respond to potential conflict-triggering situations. The multidisciplinary expertise of these teams allows for in-depth analysis of root problems and the development of targeted response strategies (Nowell et al., 2017). Communication experts can craft messages to diffuse tensions, social psychologists can understand the dynamics of involved groups, and cybersecurity specialists can handle the technical aspects of spreading potentially conflict-triggering information.

In the fourth component, the role of stakeholders interested in stopping and preventing the spread of conflict is crucial. This element includes police, military, community leaders, religious leaders, traditional leaders, NGOs, researchers, and mass media (Barnes, 2006). These stakeholders are expected to build communication, contribution, cooperation, and coordination with functional groups to prevent and stop the spread of conflicts, especially in the digital space. If a conflict arises, stakeholders are expected to proactively become part of the solution, not part of the problem. For example, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are critical in building community social cohesion and resilience. Civil organizations such as MAFINDO (Indonesian Anti-Slander Society) play a significant role in monitoring hate speech and providing educational resources emphasizing tolerance and inclusivity (Rahayu & Darmawan, 2022). Civil society groups also function as crucial early conflict detection agents, as demonstrated by the Early Warning Forum of Society (FKDM), established at the subdistrict level. This forum serves as a comprehensive channel to gather, monitor, and report information about potential conflicts at the grassroots level, effectively functioning as an early warning system. FKDM represents a form of participatory engagement that enables community members to identify potential friction points and conflict dynamics at various administrative levels, from villages and subdistricts to cities and regencies.

Furthermore, the private sector, mainly social media and technology companies, has emerged as a crucial stakeholder in conflict prevention strategies. Social media platforms, on the one hand, are a potential source of social tension, but on the other hand, they possess strong capabilities as peacebuilding tools (Baytiyeh, 2019). Companies such as Facebook and Twitter have received significant attention for their roles in spreading disinformation and hate speech. However, these companies also have substantial potential to reduce conflict by developing advanced technologies capable of identifying harmful content, promoting fact-checking mechanisms, and facilitating transparent communication channels.

The fifth component is the political will of the authorities. Malik (2017) explains that the authorities' political will is reflected in two aspects—first, the initiative and leadership of the authorities to resolve conflicts thoroughly without letting them continue. Second, there should be legal products or policies that can prevent conflicts and resolve them (Malik, 2017). This prevention and resolution perspective aligns with social control theory. The macro perspective, or micro-sociological studies, explores formal systems to control groups, such as the legal system, laws, law enforcement, and societal power groups (Clevenger & Birkbeck, 1969).

Prevention of Conflict Escalation

Implementing social control in current life patterns is difficult. In 'Social Media and the Post Truth World Order,' Cosentino explains that the filter bubble echo chamber phenomenon supports the development of wild assumptions, where emotions and beliefs

override data-based arguments, and the distinction between truth and lies becomes blurred, making the concept of absolute truth harder to find (Petricone, 2021). The decline of fact-checking culture is increasingly shaping how individuals interpret and share online information. This trend exacerbates the spread of misinformation and disinformation, especially in an era where emotional appeal often outweighs data-driven reasoning. The lack of critical evaluation mechanisms makes it easier for false narratives to gain attention, particularly when individuals are exposed to content that aligns with their pre-existing beliefs. This shift emphasizes the need for improved digital literacy and stronger fact-checking systems to combat the negative effects of misinformation on social cohesion and public discourse. Additionally, as polarization among individuals increases due to algorithmic reinforcement of biased content, the responsibility of both social media platforms and users to engage in more thoughtful information-sharing practices becomes increasingly important (Jost et al., 2022). The emergence of the filter bubble echo chamber phenomenon has fundamentally altered information dissemination mechanisms, creating an environment where emotional resonance systematically outweighs empirical evidence.

The post-truth era can be seen as a specific social shift involving mainstream media and opinion makers. Simply put, the filter bubble echo chamber phenomenon promotes the post-truth era, where information that may not be true can be accepted by society due to opinion polarization (Kalpokas, 2019). This polarization leads to excessive fanaticism from both sides. In collectivist societies, for example, messages from trusted community leaders or authoritative figures hold more significant influence regardless of their truthfulness. Depending on how it is used, this dynamic can either exacerbate the spread of misinformation or serve as a tool for positive influence.

This polarization of opinion is a consequence of algorithmic manipulation. Algorithms on social media platforms play a critical role in shaping user behavior, often reinforcing high-engagement content that strengthens biases and creates echo chambers. This phenomenon exacerbates polarization, as users are continuously exposed to views that align with their beliefs, reducing opportunities for balanced discourse (Donkers & Ziegler, 2023). To address this, it is recommended that social media platforms adopt transparency measures, including external audits of their recommendation algorithms, to ensure accountability and minimize bias reinforcement. As a result, the impact of polarization becomes more significant for internet users, potentially leading to social division in society due to differing opinions in the digital space (Cao, 2022). Over time, people become increasingly polarized because they cannot engage in dialogue with those holding opposing views. They tend to fully support topics they believe in because the substance of these topics has been repeatedly consumed, making them difficult to change. Users prefer information that aligns with their beliefs, while emotionally charged content often attracts quick attention, further deepening social divides.

Indonesia has accommodated conflict prevention in Law No. 7 of 2012 on Handling Social Conflicts and Presidential Instruction No. 1 of 2014 on Handling Internal Security Disturbances. However, the issue lies in how these regulations are interpreted and enforced for conflict prevention and resolution. The five components outlined above will influence, interact, and contribute to preventing conflicts. Before the conflict intensity spreads, it should be limited by legal proportions accommodating each conflict root. The synergy between election organizers and security is essential to prevent conflicts in the 2024 local elections. Cooperative attitudes among actors, especially election organizers, play a crucial role in improving the performance and quality of the elections. A cooperative attitude among actors can manifest through openness in establishing

communication between parties (both formally and individually), willingness to jointly address bureaucratic inefficiencies, openness to participation in finding solutions to emerging problems, and supporting or facilitating the tasks and functions of other parties optimally (Mauludina, 2020).

In terms of the government's commitment to controlling individual behavior to prevent conflicts, the government needs to strengthen political institutions, reform internal and external security regulations, and revitalize the economy and social structures. Implementing social, political, and economic changes or reconstruction to achieve lasting peace is known as Peace Building (Sudira, 2017). This process involves practically implementing peaceful social changes through political, social, and economic reconstruction and development (Galtung, 1976). The Peace Building approach is expected to prevent escalation during the presidential election from becoming violent conflicts. These programs and tools must not only carefully track the influence of major digital platforms but also remain independent to ensure they retain the unbiased ability to evaluate how both state and non-state actors, including companies, contribute to and facilitate violence in both the digital and physical environments (Ashby, 2023).

In the context of regional elections, where identity politics often plays a central role, political actors can exploit dynamics to mobilize support based on emotional appeal rather than rational and fact-based discourse. The filter bubble echo chamber phenomenon cannot be stopped systematically. According to social media founders, they cannot stop the flow of information from the media they create (Hanifa, 2022). To reduce the risk of conflict, particularly in areas with high tensions, it is crucial to address the effects of the filter bubble through strategies such as enhancing digital literacy and promoting fact-checking practices. Digital literacy can help voters critically evaluate the information they receive, preventing the spread of misleading narratives that often trigger conflict. In developing the character or culture of social media in society, the post-truth flow within the filter bubble echo chamber phenomenon can be tackled by implementing digital literacy. For example, digital literacy is the ability or skill to understand and use information from various digital sources effectively and efficiently in different formats (Husna, 2017).

Enhancing digital literacy equips individuals with the skills to navigate information from various sources and recognize biased or false content. This is particularly important in the 2024 elections, where misinformation can exacerbate tensions and cause conflict between competing political groups or ethnic communities. Building digital literacy and education is crucial to combating misinformation. For example, developing a comprehensive digital literacy curriculum in collaboration with technology companies and educational institutions can help counter the filter bubble phenomenon. This approach will strengthen community resilience to misinformation and create a more informed electorate capable of critical thinking. The result will be a population less influenced by divisive content and more prepared to engage in constructive discourse.

Building a culture of dialogue and reconciliation in social communication is essential for peacebuilding during the election process. Long-term prevention can be achieved by controlling the quality of society's individuals, known as peacebuilding, to encourage people to talk, repair relationships, and reform institutions. For positive change to be sustainable, everyone affected by destructive conflict must be involved in peace-building (Resouces, 2011). As the institution initiating the State Defence program, the Ministry of Defense of Indonesia (Kemhan RI) can take this role by incorporating digital literacy into the curriculum. This method can serve as a long-term alternative

solution for digital literacy to create a generation that loves the homeland, nation, and state by properly using information and social media.

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATION, AND LIMITATION

The 2024 regional elections underscore the influence of filter bubbles and echo chamber phenomena in the post-truth era, which have transformed how information is disseminated and understood, prioritizing emotional appeal over data-based facts. This has exacerbated societal polarization, spread disinformation, and triggered conflict, particularly in the context of elections in Indonesia. Strategic measures such as enhancing digital literacy, promoting fact-checking practices, strengthening political institutions, reforming security regulations, and fostering social communication based on dialogue and reconciliation are essential to prevent conflicts.

Moreover, additional strategies include implementing AI-based monitoring systems, launching digital literacy campaigns, and coordinating stakeholders, including the General Elections Commission (KPU), Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), social media platforms, and civil society organizations. Clear indicators of success and ethical safeguards for data privacy are also crucial to ensuring effective implementation. By transforming the digital space into a tool to uphold democratic integrity and stability, Indonesia can address immediate risks while providing valuable lessons for other nations facing similar challenges.

In pursuing long-term conflict prevention amidst the echo chamber era, coordination between the government, educational institutions, and digital platforms is necessary to develop a comprehensive digital literacy curriculum. This initiative aims to create a society that is more resilient to misleading narratives and better equipped for constructive discourse. These efforts are part of broader peacebuilding initiatives to prevent conflict escalation and promote sustainable peace.

Nevertheless, several limitations hinder the implementation of these recommendations, such as inadequate technological infrastructure in remote areas, social resistance to policy changes, and reliance on international digital platforms that often lack transparency in data management. Additionally, Indonesia's cultural and linguistic diversity demands more contextual and adaptive approaches, while limited resources, both financial and human, pose significant challenges to the execution of these programs. Therefore, an inclusive and sustainable strategy must be designed to address these limitations, ensuring the effectiveness of efforts to safeguard democratic stability and foster a society more resilient to the adverse impacts of the digital space.

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