

NAVIGATING FAITH AND DISASTER IN THE DIGITAL AGE: A NETNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF SASAK MUSLIMS

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Abstract: Recently, social media has become a critical platform for accessing information worldwide. In Indonesia, the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) reports 221.56 million internet users in 2023, indicating widespread use for information gathering. However, the vast amount of accessible content makes it challenging for users to discern credible sources, often leading to the uncritical acceptance of information. This study examines the disaster-related behavior of the Sasak Muslim community on social media. The island of Lombok, which is predominantly inhabited by the Sasak people, experienced a devastating earthquake in 2018, a traumatic event that has since become a collective memory among the Sasak community. This collective memory has played a significant role in shaping the community's behavior towards disaster preparedness. Given the Sasak people's high engagement with social media, their online behavior presents an important area of study, particularly in relation to disaster information. This research employs a netnographic analysis approach, which involves the analysis of digital media to understand community behaviors and interactions. The findings of this study reveal that the Sasak Muslim community continues to uphold Islamic values as a means of filtering information received on social media, helping them determine the veracity of the information.

Keywords: Sasak Muslim Community; Disaster-Related Behavior; Social Media; Netnography.

Introduction

In contemporary society, social media has become a prominent platform for accessing information and is immensely popular worldwide. In Indonesia, data from Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia/APJII (the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association) indicates that by 2023, the number of internet users had reached 221.563.479, out of a total population of 278.696.200.¹ This demonstrates Indonesia's significant technological adoption, particularly in the use of smartphones and internet access. Moreover, APJII reported a consistent rise in the proportion of internet users who are also active on social media, with figures climbing from 64.8% of the population in 2018 to 73.7% in 2020, 77.01% in 2022, and 78.19% in 2023.² This upward trend highlights Indonesians' substantial engagement with social media. Complementary data from the Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS (Central Bureau of Statistics) in 2023 reveals that Indonesians spend an average of 3 to 4 hours daily on the internet,³ underscoring the platform's importance in their daily lives. Social media, as a powerful tool for mass communication, exerts profound influence across various sectors, shaping societal behaviors and interactions.⁴

Social media facilitates instant access to information, eliminating delays. While it offers both positive and negative impacts, its transformative role in reshaping Indonesian societal interactions, information acquisition, and participation in social and political activities is undeniable. However, a critical downside is the proliferation of disinformation,⁵ which poses challenges such as mental health concerns and necessitates strategic solutions. With appropriate management,

¹ APJII, “APJII Jumlah Pengguna Internet Indonesia Tembus 221 Juta Orang,” February 7, 2024, <https://apjii.or.id/berita/d/apjii-jumlah-pengguna-internet-indonesia-tembus-221-juta-orang> (accessed August 9, 2024).

² Ibid.

³ Badan Pusat Statistik, “Statistik Telekomunikasi Indonesia 2022,” <https://www.bps.go.id/id/publication/2023/08/31/131385d0253c6aac7c7a59fa/statistik-telekomunikasi-indonesia-2022.html> (accessed August 9, 2024).

⁴ Tedi Gunawan, “Adaptasi Logika Media Sosial Sebagai Strategi Komunikasi Politik Gerindra Menjelang Pemilu 2024,” *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 22, no. 1 (2024): 44-60.

⁵ According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), *disinformasi* or disinformation refers to the dissemination of false information, whether through social media or other channels, with the deliberate intent of confusing others. <https://kbbi.web.id/disinformasi> (accessed August 9, 2024).

social media has the potential to foster a more open, connected, and innovative Indonesian society.⁶

The extensive dissemination of information on social media, combined with the lack of integrated verification mechanisms, often facilitates the unchecked spread of disinformation. As a result, individuals must independently cultivate critical skills to evaluate the reliability of the information they encounter. This skill set is heavily influenced by an individual's ability to assess and interpret digital content. Social media platforms generate vast quantities of information, disseminated to a wide, anonymous, and heterogeneous audience. With access to the necessary devices, individuals can readily engage with this content, emphasizing the need to equip society with the tools and knowledge required to critically navigate the digital landscape.⁷

A study by Mutanga et al. on hate speech on social media platform X (formerly Twitter) utilized machine learning to validate its findings.⁸ The research concluded that hate speech on the platform can be identified through the detection of words that inherently carry negative connotations. Addressing hate speech requires an ethical approach, which must originate from users themselves, as artificial intelligence systems lack the capacity to replicate the nuanced ethical reasoning unique to humans. Consequently, the ethical frameworks embedded in machine learning systems often reflect inherent biases, underscoring the critical need for human-driven ethical interventions to effectively mitigate the issue.⁹ Additionally, Addeo et al. employed netnography as an analytical tool in their research, highlighting it as a

⁶ Fitrah Arya Ramadhan, Yuda Amri Setiadi, and Ichsan Rahman Fauzi, "Inovasi Penguatan Literasi Digital di Kalangan Remaja Kota Tasikmalaya dalam Mendukung Pencapaian SDGs 2030," *Jurnal Sadewa: Publikasi Ilmu Pendidikan, Pembelajaran dan Ilmu Sosial* 2, no. 2 (2024): 286-294.

⁷ Margareta Aulia Rachman, "Pola Penyebaran Informasi oleh Remaja pada Masyarakat Urban di Media Sosial: Kajian Budaya Informasi," paper presented at *Seminar Nasional Budaya Urban* held by PPKB FIB UI, Depok, Indonesia, January 1, 2017.

⁸ Reymond T. Mutanga, Nalindren Naicker, and Oludayo O. Olugbara, "Detecting Hate Speech on Twitter Network Using Ensemble Machine Learning," *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications (IJACSA)* 13, no. 3 (2022): 331-339.

⁹ Ibid.

methodology tailored to studying digital media environments.¹⁰ This approach enhances data collection efficiency by providing broader access to research sites and leveraging computer-mediated communication. However, its effective application necessitates specialized skills, including selecting appropriate research sites, identifying relevant data, and analyzing and presenting findings with precision.¹¹

Social media enables the dissemination of information on a scale far beyond the reach of geographically proximate groups, offering access to diverse audiences across varying social statuses, professions, and cultural contexts.¹² However, the breadth of this dissemination often accompanies the propagation of disinformation. Perpetrators of disinformation exploit social media platforms to construct narratives that sow confusion, division, or manipulation within societies.¹³ This study focuses on the Sasak community, highlighting the importance of fostering critical literacy and cultural awareness to counteract the negative impacts of disinformation and maintain social cohesion.

Against this backdrop, this study aims to examine how the Sasak Muslim community processes and interprets disaster-related information on social media. The research employs a descriptive approach, utilizing netnographic analysis to investigate social behaviors in digital contexts. Netnography, an adaptation of ethnographic methods for online communities,¹⁴ offers a nuanced framework for qualitative analysis.¹⁵ Through this lens, the study delves into public perceptions and reactions to disaster-related issues as they unfold on Indonesian social media platforms, particularly focusing on the interactions and

¹⁰ Felice Addeo et al., “Doing Social Research on Online Communities: The Benefits of Netnography,” *Athens Journal of Social Science* 7, no. 1 (2020): 9-38.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Dendy Suseno Adhiarso, Prahastiwi Utari, and Yulius Slamet, “Pemberitaan Hoax di Media Online Ditinjau dari Konstruksi Berita dan Respon Netizen,” *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 15, no. 3 (2017): 215-225.

¹³ Dedi Rianto Rahadi, “Perilaku Pengguna dan Informasi Hoax di Media Sosial,” *Jurnal Manajemen dan Kewirausahaan* 5, no. 1 (2017): 58-70.

¹⁴ Leesa Costello, Marie-Louise McDermott and Ruth Wallace, “Netnography: Range of Practices, Misperceptions, and Missed Opportunities,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16 (2017): 1-2.

¹⁵ Frank-Martin Belz and Wenke Baumbach, “Netnography as a Method of Lead User Identification,” *Creativity and Innovation Management* 17, no. 4 (2008): 304-313.

narratives surrounding such events.¹⁶ Netnography is instrumental in deciphering social interactions within digital communication environments. It encompasses a systematic process of data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation, grounded in the observation of digital media dynamics. By analyzing digital conversations and user responses, netnography provides insights into how individuals engage with information, react to narratives, and contribute to the evolving discourse on social media platforms.¹⁷

In this study, the digital media observation is specifically focused on X, where the information gathered is then analyzed in terms of the interactions that occur within the posts being studied. These interactions include processes such as commenting, liking, and sharing posts by users.¹⁸ Essentially, netnography is a phenomenological, interpretative research method that adapts traditional techniques, particularly direct observation from anthropology, to understand the interactions and experiences that manifest through digital communication.¹⁹

In this study, the information obtained from X is collected based on five principles that must be implemented.²⁰ First, simplification of data using keywords derived from the research questions. In this research, we simplify it by adjusting the research keywords, by writing the magnitude 6.4 Lombok earthquake as the keyword that we will focus on. Second, providing keywords to facilitate the search process on social media. To streamline the process of data retrieval on X, it is essential to utilize hashtags as keywords, such as #Lombok-Earthquake, #Earthquake6.4RichterScale or #Earthquake2018. Third, conducting data searches based on keywords among the in-

¹⁶ Alessandro Caliandro, “Digital Methods for Ethnography: Analytical Concepts for Ethnographers Exploring Social Media Environments,” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 47, no. 5 (2018): 551-578.

¹⁷ Robert V. Kozinets, *Netnography: Doing Ethnographic Research Online* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2010); Burhan Bungin, *Netnography: Social Media Research Procedure, Big Data & Cybercommunity: Kritik terhadap Kozinets* (Jakarta: Penerbit Kencana, 2023), 6-7.

¹⁸ Moh. Faisol and Norsain, “Netnografi: Perspektif Netizen Terhadap Kenaikan Tarif PPN 11%,” *Jurnal Akademi Akuntansi* 6, no. 2 (2023), 167-182.

¹⁹ Bungin, *Netnography*, 6-7; Fredric Berge and Jan Gaede, “A Netnographic Study of the Company-Owned Facebook Pages of Nike and Adidas” (MA Thesis--Uppsala Universitet, Uppsala, 2017).

²⁰ Robert V. Kozinet, *Netnography Redefined*, 2nd Edition (London: Sage Publications, 2015).

formation available on social media. Based on these keywords, we categorize the collected data according to the formulated research objectives. Forth, selecting data, with this step aimed at filtering and choosing relevant data according to the previous stages. The data we collected is then focused on users originating from Lombok by following up with them through direct messaging. Disaster-related information is provided by credible, verified accounts (marked with a blue check) that discuss disasters, as well as reliable government accounts. Fifth, the selected data is then stored to enable further analysis. We then analyze the data that has been collected using netnography rules which aim to be able to answer the questions of this research.

The data that has been previously collected is then organized based on the research questions or needs. It is analyzed by examining the pros and cons within the data, with the aim of understanding the depth of the information received. This analysis allows for a deeper exploration of the dynamics involved. Following this, comments are provided based on relevant theories to help interpret and understand the public discourse on the theme under study.²¹

Islamic Values as a Social Media Filter

Social media serves as a bridge facilitating the flow of information between traditional and modern societies. It enables the transfer of information from the government to its citizens and vice versa, allowing the public to communicate feedback regarding services received.²² As a platform offering diverse and easily accessible channels, social media can become an effective tool for delivering feedback, criticisms, or suggestions to improve governance and societal interactions. However, the utility of social media depends heavily on ethical use, which requires collective efforts to educate all segments of society on responsible online behavior. Unfortunately, many social media users exploit the platform for negative purposes, leading to potential harm for both the government and society at large. This emphasizes the dual role of social media as a conduit for collaboration and innovation while also requiring strict adherence to

²¹ Addeo et al., “Doing Social Research on Online Communities.”

²² Mulawarman and Aldila Dyas Nurfitri, “Perilaku Pengguna Media Sosial beserta Implikasinya Ditinjau dari Perspektif Psikologi Sosial Terapan,” *Buletin Psikologi* 25, no. 1 (2017): 36-44.

ethical norms to maximize its positive impact and mitigate potential risks.

The challenges arising from the use of social media today include the widespread dissemination of disinformation, to the extent that even educated individuals struggle to distinguish credible information from falsehoods. The unchecked and unfiltered spread of such information ultimately has legal consequences and can lead to societal division.²³ One of the main causes of disinformation is the rapid technological advancements that make sharing information effortless without proper verification. If disinformation continues to spread, it can result in various problems, such as the emergence of lies and slander. This is fundamentally at odds with Islamic teachings. Disinformation can lead to the spread of false or fake news, which, from an Islamic perspective, can be categorized as *al-‘ifk*, meaning a reversal or distortion, akin to an upheaval (like an earthquake overturning the land). In this context, it refers to a significant falsehood, as lies constitute the distortion of truth.²⁴ The spread of falsehood is attributed to rebellious individuals. Therefore, it is essential to exercise caution in receiving and sharing information.

Information refers to data that has been processed into a form that is meaningful to its recipient and useful for current or future decision-making.²⁵ According to experts, information is defined as data that has been transformed or endowed with significance. It is also recognized as a resource that can be managed similarly to other strategic resources. Furthermore, information is processed data that holds practical utility for users in decision-making processes. Good information adds value to its user by being applicable for purposes such as planning, coordination, evaluation, and decision-making.²⁶ Therefore, information must possess specific characteristics to be

²³ Rulli Nasrullah, *Media Sosial: Perspektif Komunikasi, Budaya dan Sosioteknologi* (Jakarta: Simbiosa Rekatama Media, 2015).

²⁴ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian Al-Quran* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), 296.

²⁵ Hamdi Agustin, *Sistem Informasi Manajemen dalam Perspektif Islam* (Depok: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, 2019).

²⁶ Merdeka.com, “Fungsi Sistem Informasi, Ketahui Pengertian Menurut Ahli beserta Manfaatnya,” *Merdeka.com*, <https://www.merdeka.com/trending/fungsi-sistem-informasi-ketahui-pengertian-menurutahli-beserta-manfaatnya-kln.html> (accessed February, 2024).

effective: it should reduce uncertainty, highlight potential opportunities, and enable the evaluation of outcomes.

Additionally, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL),²⁷ a nonprofit organization based in the United States and established in 1913, focuses on combating antisemitism, hatred, and discrimination against all groups. Its core mission extends to promoting human rights, advocating for public policies that support social justice, and educating the public on issues related to hatred, such as hate speech on social media. In one of its studies on hate speech targeting ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, and religion on social media, the ADL reported a notable finding: Muslim respondents indicated a slight decrease in religion-based harassment, dropping from 61% last year to 57% this year, compared to respondents from other religious groups.²⁸ This finding suggests that Islamic values may play a significant role in shaping social media communication behavior.

Information has the power to build different viewpoints or perspectives in society. Furthermore, information can build and destroy the existing order in people's lives, this is certainly a concern for every circle so that the information that reaches is good and constructive information. In the midst of the swift flow of information, the community is required to be able to filter the information received. The ability to filter the information received can help in curating disinformation. Because misinformation will result in errors in making a decision. Information can influence our behavior.²⁹

This study positions Islamic values as a lens for navigating the dialectics of data, defined here as the interplay between the massive influx of information on social media and individuals' ability to discern credible and ethical content. Drawing on Islamic teachings, such as the principle of truthfulness (*sidq*), the study emphasizes the importance of conveying accurate information. By ensuring the truthfulness of shared information, societal harmony can be preserved, misunderstandings that might arise from misinformation

²⁷ ADL, "Online Hate and Harassment: The American Experience 2021," March 22, 2021, https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/202205/Online%20Hate%20and%20Harassment%202021_042821_V17%28%29.pdf (accessed February, 2024).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Erwan Effendi et al., "Konsep Sistem Informasi dalam Perspektif Islam," *Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research* 3, no. 2 (2023): 33-42.

can be minimized, and misperceptions stemming from false or ambiguous content can be eliminated.³⁰

To convey information accurately, one must possess the ability to critically evaluate and select the information received. In Islam, this process is referred to as *tabayyun* (verification of information). *Tabayyun* is a methodical process rooted in a fundamental principle: verifying or ascertaining the truth of information before acting upon or disseminating it.³¹ The information obtained must be credible, clear, and beneficial, with its source and authenticity carefully scrutinized. In essence, *tabayyun* involves seeking further clarification by thoroughly examining facts and alternative perspectives related to the information. This includes prioritizing clarification, investigating the background of the source, and understanding its context in depth. The Qur'an underscores the importance of this principle in al-Hujurāt [49]: 6, which advises caution when receiving information, especially from unreliable sources. The verse emphasizes the necessity of conducting investigations to ensure accuracy before making decisions or spreading news, thus preventing misunderstandings or harm.³²

According to M. Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir Al-Misbah*,³³ the principle of *tabayyun* is highly relevant in the modern era, particularly in the context of social media usage. He highlights the phenomenon of mass information dissemination, which often lacks proper verification. Social media empowers anyone to become a source and distributor of information, frequently disregarding accuracy or the consequences of such actions. This commentary emphasizes that the spread of information without adhering to *tabayyun* can lead to significant harm, including slander, conflict, and substantial societal damage. Shihab underscores the critical need for caution and thorough verification, reflecting the timeless wisdom of Islamic teachings in navigating contemporary challenges.³⁴

³⁰ Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 21 (Cairo: Dār al-Salām, 2007), 274-275.

³¹ Puput Yanita Senja, Fathurrohman Husen, and Ade Yuliar, “Moderate Mileniala Tabayyun’s Implementation in Social Media,” *Proceeding International Conference on Islam and Education (ICONIE)* 2, no. 1 (2022): 293-307. <https://proceeding.uingusdu.ac.id/index.php/iconie/article/view/602/314>

³² Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah*.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ M. Quraish Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2013).

In the context of social media, caution and *tabayyun* of information can be carried out by directly asking the accounts that spread the information. Additionally, it is important to search for comparative information to verify whether the information is true or not. This also helps in filtering the information shared by checking whether the account spreading it is credible. Many accounts without clear identities spread information that cannot be verified, often aiming to reconstruct their identity through status posts or sharing links without considering whether the information is true or disinformation.³⁵

In carrying out *tabayyun* to check the truth of information, several skills are required from the community. These include comparing the information received with other sources, assessing whether the information spread by a source is credible, and directly asking the person spreading the information through comments to verify its truth. The goal of this is to protect the community (*Muslim Ummah*) on social media from spreading information that could lead to *fitnah* (slander). As explained in al-Hujurāt [49]: 6, Islam strongly prohibits the spread of falsehood, rumors, or misleading information that can damage social relationships and lead to injustice. Islamic teachings emphasize the principles of caution, the search for truth, and justice when receiving and spreading information.³⁶

This requires effort from the public to understand the information received from social media. However, it also helps social media users avoid the spread of *fitnah* and breaks the chain of disinformation in society.³⁷ Furthermore, the principle of *tabayyun* emphasizes the importance of verifying information before taking action, while the prohibition of *fitnah*, gossip (*ghibah*), and suspicion teaches the importance of maintaining social harmony. An example of controlling emotions when receiving news is found in al-Qaṣāṣ [28]: 8, where the Qur'an regulates the dialectics between Pharaoh's desire to control and the prophetic mission to liberate from such forms of control. This suggests the need for self-awareness to manage

³⁵ Christian Fuchs, *Social Media: A Critical Introduction* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2014).

³⁶ Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, "Melawan Hoax Menjaga Hati," in *Melawan Hoax di Media Sosial dan Media Massa*, eds. Aep Wahyudin and Manik Sunuantari (Jakarta: Askopis Press, 2017).

³⁷ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah*.

emotions when receiving news.³⁸ Calmness appears to be key in performing *tabayyun*. Thus, a Muslim is expected to always act wisely when evaluating and sharing information, in accordance with the Islamic values of truth and justice.

The Islamic value that can serve as a foundation for responsibly disseminating information obtained from social media, once its truth has been confirmed, is *amānah* (trustworthiness). *Amānah* refers to conveying information accurately, without exaggeration or omission. A true believer (*mu'min*) must deliver information truthfully and without deviation, ensuring that their words do not lead to falsehood. By speaking the truth, a person is guided by to God toward the clear path of righteousness. As narrated in a Hadīth reported by Muslim, “Whoever guides to good, will receive the reward of the one who does it.” This highlights the importance of not only spreading truthful information but also encouraging others toward good actions, reflecting the ethical responsibility that comes with the trust of sharing knowledge.³⁹

The explanation of this Hadīth is highly relevant, especially in the context of information dissemination on social media. When an individual shares news or information that brings benefit and goodness to others, they are also rewarded for the positive outcomes that follow. Conversely, if the information shared is negative, misleading, or harmful, the individual becomes responsible for the negative consequences it causes.⁴⁰ This understanding underscores the ethical responsibility of individuals in the digital age, where the spread of information can have far-reaching impacts. It highlights the importance of ensuring that the content shared aligns with values of truthfulness and beneficial knowledge, as the consequences of sharing harmful or false information can be far-reaching and impactful on both individual and societal levels.⁴¹ The Hadīth serves as a guiding principle, reminding Muslims that the act of disseminating information carries both moral responsibility and spiritual reward.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Adzah Zahzuli, “Etika Berkomunikasi dalam Islam,” *Busyro: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi Islam* 4, no. 1 (2022): 1-8.

⁴⁰ Amrullah Ahmad, *Dakwah Islam dan Perubahan Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Prima Duta, 1984), 7.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Sasak Muslims' Understanding of Disaster Information

Similar to the general population of Indonesia, the Sasak community is actively engaged in social media use. Data indicates that out of a total population of 5.4 million in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) Province, approximately 2.7 million are active social media users. Social media has indeed become one of the primary avenues for the Sasak people to acquire and disseminate information.⁴² The use of social media is influenced by the amount of time (duration and frequency), the content of the media, and the relationship between the media and its users. For the Muslim Sasak community, social media usage has become an inevitable aspect, particularly when it comes to obtaining disaster-related information. As we know, NTB Province, especially the Lombok island, has experienced a significant earthquake with a magnitude of 6.4 on the Richter scale, which resulted in substantial loss of life.⁴³ This event still lingers in the memory of the Sasak people residing on the Lombok island.

For the Sasak people, their worldview perceives the earth as a whole, which they refer to as *Gumi Nene*' which means the earth belongs to God. While the space that is inhabited for generations is called *Gumi Paer* (territory). The Sasak people live with values and traditions that are closely related to nature. As an agrarian society living in the mountains and coastal areas, they developed a way of life based on natural cycles, and maintain a balance between human life and the surrounding environment. For the Sasak people, nature is not only a source of life, but also has a deep spiritual meaning. Their traditions and beliefs place nature as an important element in daily life. The Sasak people recognize God with various expressions, namely calling Him *Nene*' (God), *Nene' Kaji Saq Kuase* (Almighty God), *Si Epeyang Ita* (The Owner of Humankind). Everything is a form of human servitude as a creature to the Creator.

For the Sasak people, disasters such as earthquakes are often considered a test from the God, or as a response to human behavior

⁴² TN, "Sebanyak 2,7 Juta Masyarakat NTB Aktif Medsos, Gede: Teknologi Informasi sarana Vital di Tengah Pandemi," *Talika News*, September 2, 2020, <https://www.talikanews.com/2020/09/02/sebanyak-27-juta-masyarakat-ntb-aktif-medsos-ge-de-teknologi-informasi-sarana-vital/> (accessed August 13, 2024).

⁴³ Nur Hidayati et al., "Ulasan Guncangan Tanah Akibat Gempa Lombok Timur," retrieved from <https://prosesweb.bmkg.go.id/wp-content/uploads/Ulasan-Guncangan-Gempa-Lombok-Timur-29072018.pdf> (accessed August 13, 2024).

that has no respect for nature. Living in nature and exploiting nature at will. Everything is done in the name of progress and economy, so that nature that was once a familiar friend is now replaced with modern facilities that are attached and without seeing the natural conditions around it. The Sasak people believe that maintaining harmony with nature is the best way to protect themselves from disaster.⁴⁴ This is reflected in traditions such as *bersih dese* (cleaning village) ritual, *ngayu-ayu* (post-harvest ritual tradition) where they pray to the God from any danger.

As emphasized in the Qur'an, the importance of preserving harmony with nature is articulated in al-A'rāf [7]: 56, which highlights two fundamental principles: the prohibition against causing destruction on Earth and the exhortation to pray with fear (*khanj*) and hope (*rajā'*). In his *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, Shihab interprets this verse as a comprehensive injunction against all forms of destruction, encompassing not only physical harm but also moral, social, and environmental degradation. He underscores that the God created the Earth with inherent balance and harmony, placing upon humanity the responsibility to sustain this equilibrium as part of their divine stewardship.⁴⁵

Aligned with this, the Sasak community embodies local wisdom rooted in Islamic teachings. Local wisdom refers to the deeply ingrained worldview of a community concerning their natural environment, shaped by generations of lived experience over decades or even centuries. Within the Sasak tradition, such wisdom manifests in practices that harmonize with religious values and ecological sustainability. Elders play a pivotal role in preserving these traditions, transmitting them from one generation to the next as an enduring legacy. This intergenerational transmission ensures that cultural and environmental values remain integral to the community's identity and survival.⁴⁶

Given that local wisdom is an idea that is decades old, the local wisdom that exists in an area is so embedded and difficult to separate

⁴⁴ Yuliana, Sapiin, and Muh. Syahrul Qodri, "Bentuk dan Fungsi Jejampi Sasak dalam Masyarakat Dusun Peresak di Desa Tetebatu Lombok Timur: Kajian Folklor," *Jurnal Lisdaya* 4, no. 1 (2024).

⁴⁵ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah*.

⁴⁶ I Wayan Sudiartawan and I Wayan Sutama, "Komunikasi Budaya dalam Tradisi Ngelowong Masyarakat Sasak Wetu Telu di Lombok," *Jurnal Sembada: Jurnal Riset Komunikasi, Media dan Public Relation* 1, no. 2 (2022): 75-86.

from the people who live in that area. Furthermore, understanding local wisdom is that everything that includes traditional views of life is not always bad and not always the wrong view. In fact, it could be the opposite, because the local wisdom that is maintained is what makes a community so unique and different from people living in other areas. With local wisdom, the social order and natural surroundings are maintained and preserved.⁴⁷

In addition, local wisdom is also a form of cultural wealth that must be grasped tightly, especially by the younger generation to fight globalization. That way the characteristics of the local community will never fade. Moreover, local wisdom comes from our ancestors, who understood everything especially related to their region. In addition, there is wisdom and also good things in the local wisdom, but sometimes it is difficult to understand by young people from the current generation.⁴⁸ Conversely, a view that is too modern has the potential to be more damaging, especially to existing local wisdom. It is even possible that it will damage the existing culture, as well as the surrounding nature. This concern is certainly very basic, considering that social media information is currently flooded with various kinds of information that can lead to misunderstanding of what is really happening.

Currently, information related to disasters throughout Indonesia is easily accessible through print and electronic media, especially social media. Information that is currently circulating is related to the news of a megathrust that will occur in Indonesia. Megathrust is a term used to describe the potential for large earthquakes to occur in subduction zones, where tectonic plates collide and one plate is subducted beneath another. Indonesia is located between three major tectonic plates, the Eurasian Plate, the Indo-Australian Plate and the Pacific Plate, which makes it prone to large earthquakes. In Indonesia, megathrust earthquakes are one of the biggest threats because Indonesia is along the Pacific Ring of Fire and lies at the confluence of three major tectonic plates: Indo-Australian, Eurasian, and Pacific. Lombok Island is close to the megathrust zone in southern Nusa Tenggara, which is part of the Sunda subduction zone. Experts

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Temesgen Magule Olango et al., “Indigenous Knowledge, Use and On-farm Management of Enset (Ensete Ventricosum (Welw.) Cheesman) Diversity in Wolaita, Southern Ethiopia,” *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine* 10, no. 41 (2014): 41.

predict that along this zone there is great potential for future megathrust earthquakes.⁴⁹



Figure 1. Megathrust estimation map spread on X. Photo by BMKG, 2024.

The information⁵⁰ only included images and the potential magnitude of the earthquake that would occur. However, no explanation was given about when it would occur, how it would occur and which areas would be affected. This is certainly worrying for many people. Therefore, this information can be responded to positively and negatively. If the information is responded positively, it can be one of the references for the Sasak community to be able to carry out disaster preparedness. In addition, the lack of clarity of this information can build negative perceptions in the midst of society, especially directed at policy makers, because there is no learning related to disaster preparedness. Therefore, disaster information that is spread both in whatsapp groups and other social media certainly needs to be in harmony with the information disseminated by BMKG

⁴⁹ Fazri Maulana, “Apa Itu Gempa Megathrust? Dampak, dan Zonanya di Indonesia,” *UMJ Website*, August 15, 2024, https://umj.ac.id/just_info/apa-itu-gempa-megathrust-dampak-dan-zonanya-di-indonesia/ (accessed August 17, 2024).

⁵⁰ Dewi Ratna Ningsih, “BMKG Peringatkan Gempa Megathrust, Apa yang Harus Kita Ketahui?” *Radio Republik Indonesia*, August 21, 2024, <https://www.rri.co.id/iptek/918891/bmkg-peringatkan-gempa-megathrust-apa-yang-harus-kita-ketahui> (accessed August 25, 2024).

(Meteorology Climatology and Geophysics Agency) or BPBD (Regional Disaster Management Agency) as a representation of the Government.⁵¹



Figure 2. Disaster information by Redaksi Mataram Inside on X.

The unstoppable spread of information on social media, on the one hand, can be a means of getting information with a broader perspective. This is shown in the information disseminated by the @InsideMataram account, where the account on platform X helped spread the potential megatrust that would befall the people of Lombok. The information received by the public massively certainly makes people tend to think, whether the information contains truth value or only disinformation. To be able to know this, it is necessary to crosscheck (*tabayyun*) the information circulating in the community. The ability to crosscheck is one of the things that must be owned by social media users, this will certainly be one way to find out whether the information provided is correct or not.⁵²

⁵¹ Yusron, “Di Era Medsos, Pemerintah Harus Mampu Mengelola Informasi dengan Cepat,” *BPBD Jawa Timur*, November 20, 2020, <https://web.bpbpd.jatimprov.go.id/2020/11/20/di-era-medsos-pemerintah-harus-mampu-mengelola-informasi-dengan-cepat/> (accessed August 15, 2024).

⁵² Aryani Witasari and Masrur Ridwan, “Hoax News Study on Social Media Based on Islamic Law and Law No. 19 Of 2016 Concerning Amendments to Law No. 11 Of 2008 Concerning Electronic Transactions and Information,” *The 2nd Proceeding International Conference and Call Paper, Sultan Agung Islamic University* 1, no. 1 (2020), retrieved from <https://jurnal.unissula.ac.id/index.php/lics/article/view/13742/5220> (accessed August 17, 2024).

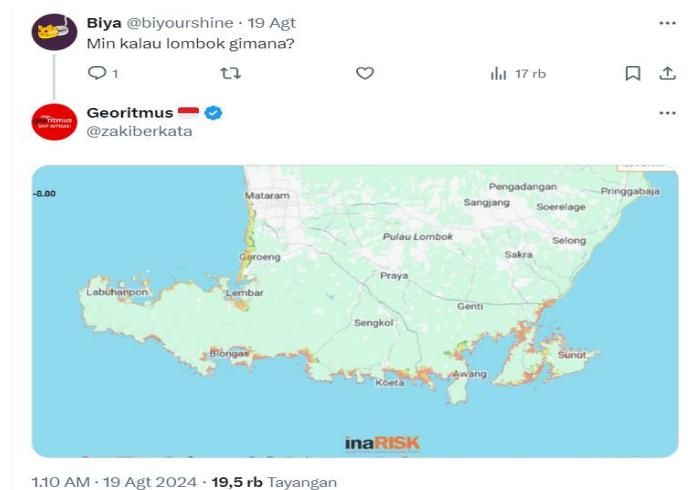


Figure 3. A response of a Sasak user on disaster information spread on X.

The Sasak community responds to information spread on social media by prioritizing Islamic values, namely *tabayyun*, on information circulating among social media users. The information is also asked directly to a verified account so that the information obtained is more reliable and no disinformation occurs. Moreover, this account has a track record of providing disaster-related information based on data from validated sources, including official government accounts. Additionally, this account is verified on platform X (despite the fact that blue checkmarks can now be purchased); however, this account received its verification prior to Twitter's acquisition and rebranding as X. Therefore, we consider this account to be a credible reference on X for disaster-related information. This was also revealed by one of traditional leaders of Sasak society, Lalu Sadaruddin, saying that: “*Lamun te mule Enget, manusie sino sak, tulak jok saq-saq. Lamun te mele irup solah, harus te saling tao kance selapukn*” (If we examine within ourselves that humans are one and will return to the One. If we want to live well, then we must be able to adapt to our surroundings).⁵³

⁵³ Interview with Lalu Sadaruddin, a Sasak community leader, July 17, 2024.

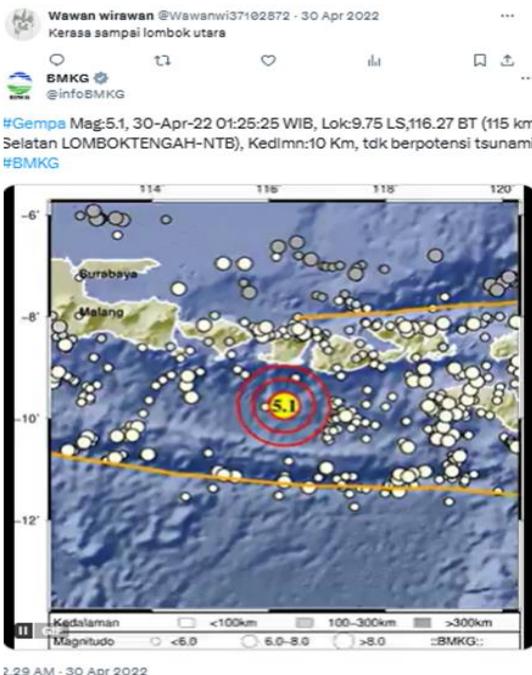


Figure 4. A response by Sasak user on disaster information by BMKG spread on X.

From the information, it is evident that BMKG (the government representative) provided information regarding the earthquake that occurred in Lombok in 2022. This information was promptly responded to by one account, @Wawanwi37102572, who reported feeling the tremors as far as North Lombok. As we know, Lombok has previously experienced large-scale earthquakes, which may lead to concerns among the local population when an earthquake of considerable magnitude occurs.

While the Sasak people may not have a scientific understanding of megathrust earthquakes, they do have local knowledge formed from experiences of dealing with previous earthquakes. They know how to deal with earthquakes through adaptive behaviors, such as building lightweight and flexible houses, and following their instincts to move away from the coast after a strong earthquake as a tsunami prevention measure. Adaptive living behavior has been applied by the Sasak people, which can be seen from the traditional houses of the Sasak people, especially in traditional villages such as Sade and Rembitan. The traditional houses are built with natural materials such

as bamboo, wood and thatch. The structure of this house is designed to adapt to the surrounding environment, making it resistant to tropical weather conditions and earthquakes that occur in the Lombok region.⁵⁴

Understanding of environmental conditions is influenced by how much information is obtained. Sasak people try to build an understanding of the information obtained associated with good values from Islamic teachings, as well as local wisdom inherited by the ancestors. For the younger generation who have better intellectual abilities than before, in their minds they certainly compare the information obtained related to the issue of megatrust (large earthquakes) that will occur with existing facts. The formation of self-perception influenced by information obtained in social media sometimes affects the real world.⁵⁵ The information received about the earthquake in Lombok creates its own perception for those who receive the information. Sometimes information related to certain regions, especially earthquakes, is always associated with conditions in other regions in Indonesia. Given that Indonesia is an archipelago.

The Sasak Muslim community, sees the information received based on Islamic values in the Qur'an and Ḥadīth. So that any information obtained tends to be responded to positively, in accordance with Islamic values, and when explaining the information with the aim of educating and enlightening people and in the process of delivering the information in accordance with the level of community thinking. This can be seen from the comments of X users, in responding to information related to the Lombok earth-quake.

⁵⁴ Sudiartawan and Sutama, "Komunikasi Budaya dalam Tradisi Ngelowong Masyarakat Sasak Wetu Telu di Lombok."

⁵⁵ Egi Regita, Nabilah Luthfiyyah, and Nur Riswandy Marsuki, "Pengaruh Media Sosial terhadap Persepsi Diri dan Pembentukan Identitas Remaja di Indonesia," *Jurnal Kajian Penelitian Ummum* 2, no. 1 (2024): 46-52.



Figure 5. Response to the Lombok earthquake information on X.

The information presented from the image, shows the a user tried to *tabayyun* on the social media account @infoBMKG which represents the government. This is one way of clarifying the truth of the information. In addition, the account also shows a religious side by expressing the divine phrase to show its servant side. Because all truth comes from God.

In the context of social media, the construction of social reality occurs very quickly and widely due to the nature of social media that allows instant interaction and dissemination of information. The information spread on social media gradually shapes public perception of reality. Some of the mechanisms that make information on social media become social reality include: a) repetition and viralization. When information is repeatedly shared, liked and commented on, the message becomes real in the minds of many people, even though the information may not be entirely true. The repetition and spread of information makes it seem more convincing and credible. b) The formation of collective narratives. Social media allows many people to participate in the formation of a collective narrative about an event, phenomenon or issue. For example, narratives about politics, social change, or natural disasters can be formed and agreed upon collectively by social media users, which are then considered as shared truths. c) Bubble Filter One of the main challenges in social media is the bubble filter phenomenon, where users are only exposed to information and views that align with their own beliefs. This reinforces a very specific and limited social reality, which can differ from the reality experienced by other social groups. Ultimately, this shapes different perceptions of reality among different groups of people. d) Disinformation. As the process of objectification and internalization on social media can be very fast,

even false or unverified information can quickly become a social reality for a large section of society. When many people accept and share information without verifying it, it can become widely accepted as reality.⁵⁶

For example, misinformation that was quickly addressed by the head of BNPB (National Disaster Management Agency) at the time highlights the dangers it poses. When misinformation is framed as news, it has the potential to shape public perception and be mistakenly accepted as truth, as illustrated in the image below:

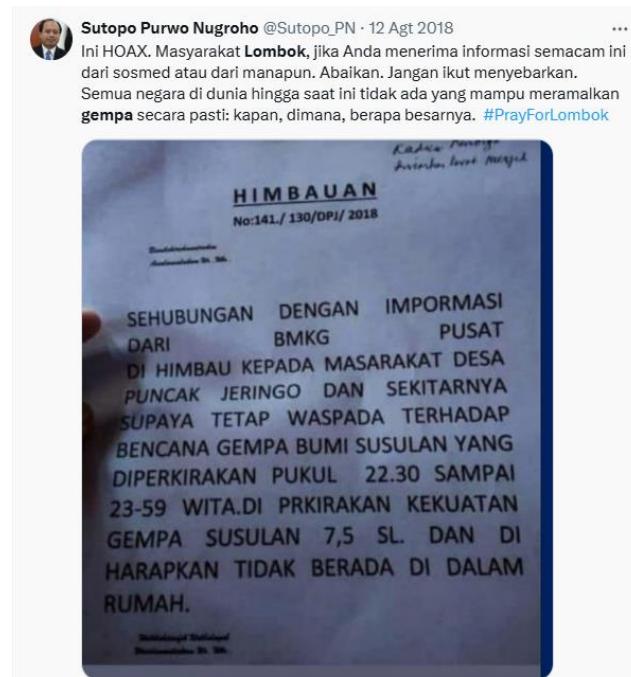


Figure 6. One instance of misinformation during the Lombok earthquake disaster was responded to and subsequently disseminated by the head of BNPB at the time, Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, with the aim of raising awareness among the public.

Therefore, in the case of news coverage of potential megathrust earthquakes in Indonesia, the narratives constructed on social media can influence people's perception of the reality of the threat. If

⁵⁶ Ferry Adhi Dharma, "Konstruksi Realitas Sosial: Pemikiran Peter L. Berger tentang Kenyataan Sosial," *Kanal: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 7, no. 1 (2018): 1-9.

inaccurate or exaggerated information about earthquake risk is widely disseminated, the public may perceive the threat as closer or more certain than it actually is. The processes of externalization, objectification and internalization that occur on social media allow narratives, both true and false, to become part of a social reality that is believed and accepted by many people. Social media facilitates the formation of this social reality quickly and widely, thus having a major impact on how people understand the world around them.

Conclusion

Sasak Muslim community in Lombok, which engages with social media, can utilize their local wisdom as an essential tool for filtering information, particularly regarding disaster-related issues such as megathrust earthquakes. The Sasak local wisdom, rooted in Islamic and cultural values, emphasizes principles of caution, solidarity, and *tabayyun* when receiving and disseminating information. By blending Islamic teachings like *tabayyun* and social norms that respect harmony with nature, the Sasak community can adopt a more critical approach toward information circulating on social media. They tend to be more selective in responding to disaster reports or predictions, ensuring that the information is verified by credible sources and does not provoke unfounded panic.

Netnography views social interactions in the digital world as an extension of cultural interactions in everyday life. In this context, the Muslim Sasak community not only uses social media to share and receive information but also leverages it to reinforce their cultural and religious identity, which serves as a natural filter for sifting through information.

This awareness enables them to remain vigilant against disaster threats while maintaining social calm and prioritizing concrete mitigation measures based on scientific facts and existing traditions. Ultimately, this combination of local wisdom and religious values strengthens the community's resilience to disinformation and fake news, allowing them to respond to disasters more effectively and wisely.

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