

## Research Article

# Is the Indonesian Government Islamophobic? Studies Using Social Network Analysis

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This study aims to map the narratives, networks, and influential figures on social media Twitter after the arrest of suspected terrorists (Farid Okbah cs and Sunardi) by Detachment 88 anti-terror in Indonesia. We use the social network and content analysis methods in collecting and analyzing research data. The results of this study show that the anti-Islamic political group with government (opposition) is currently trying to make a narrative that the Indonesian government is Islamophobic, by utilizing the momentum of suspected terrorist arrests in Farid Okbah and Sunardi by Detachment 88 by shifting the issue of terrorist arrests from the JI group who are also members of MUI with the demand for dissolving the Government Institution Detachment 88 Anti-terror. The social network map shows that there were three groups engaged in the arrest of suspected terrorists Farid Okbah and Sunardi, 1) Muslim Group Cyber Army (MCA); 2) Pro-government buzzer group through Denny Siregar's account; 3) The provocateurs group. The arrest of Farid Okbah and Sunardi turned into political issues, Islamic groups (MUI) vs. Government (Detachment). The arrest of Farid Okbah by Detachment 88 was dominated by #saminawaathonaibhrs and #Islamophobia, while the dominant narrative after the suspected arrest of Sunardi's is #PKItangkapulama (PKI Arrest Ulama) and #dukungMUI (Support MUI), both of these things showed an effort to accompany the issue to the political narrative of the opposition group to weaken the government with the narrative that discriminated government of Islamic groups.

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## 1. Introduction

The arrest of suspected terrorists by Detachment 88 namely Farid Okbah Cs and Sunardi which occurred in November 2021 and March 2022 was sufficient to make a rookery of social media in Indonesia, the reason was that of the three suspected terrorists arrested one of them was the management of the MUI Center for the Fatwa and the other two known as Ulama which is well known to the public because of his lecture. After the arrest, Twitter social media was enlivened by the hashtag #Islamophobhia and #Bubarkandensus88 (Disperse Densus 88) which was dominated by a negative response to Detachment 88 and also the Indonesian government. Previously, the official of the FPI (Islamic Defenders Front) organization, Habib Rizieq Sihab, was subject to criminal law because of cases of health protocol violations after his arrival in Indonesia. Not long after, another FPI official, Munarman, was also arrested by Detachment 88 because it was allegedly related to the organization and movement of the ISIS group in Indonesia.

A series of arrests raised perceptions in the public that the Indonesian government was afraid of the Islamic group movement marked by the emergence of hash-tags on Twitter, #Islamophobia and also #Kriminalization. This movement received resistance from a pro-government group with the narrative that the government had carried out the legal process appropriately by arresting the suspects marked by the hashtag #Bravodensus88 and #Bunjutui. What's interesting is that the pro netizen of the government raises the hashtag #BubarkanMUI (Disperse Indonesian Council of Ulama) related to the arrest of one of the MUI administrators related to the terrorism case, allegedly the suspect is related to one of the terrorist groups that are prohibited in Indonesia, namely Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). Even so, the two narratives that emerged could be grouped into two main groups, namely people who became pro-government groups and also anti-government. The opinion of opinion through two narratives that confront each other needs to be observed to anticipate the impact that arises from social media that have an impact on the formation of public opinion, political attitudes and also polarization in the community, especially those related to the context of the Indonesian government accused of Islamophobia.

Islamophobia itself is fear, hatred, or prejudice towards the religion of Islam or Muslims in general, especially when seen as geopolitical forces or sources of terrorism.[1] Narration that the Indonesian Islamic Government is led through a series of narratives that the Indonesian government is considered to discriminate against Muslims by

criminalizing the ulama or Muslim movement figures. Seeing the phenomenon that occurred in Indonesia, it strengthens the findings of Baloğlu who conducted research related to the pros and cons of the political situation in Turkey using the content analysis of hastags and thematic Analysis on Twitter social media.[2] Tweet was chosen from users with the most followers, mostly retweeted and liked between 18,000 tweets. The first analysis uses the Communication Strategies of the Troll that supports one of the parties that supports the government, where 18,000 tweets are randomized by the hashtag #devletiminyanındayım (I am with my government). The second analysis, examining the hashtag used by users aimed at counter-discourse and see how many people are on the way the counter efforts are. The results of the study were found that Twitter did not have sufficient potential for the formation of the narration of The neo-Gramscian Counterhegemony in Turkey.

Islamophobia occurred in leisure in the form of unethical comments and behaviours. Islamophobia triggers the emergence of feelings of fear, sadness and anger.[3] It was also found that Islamophobia was more common online because the internet provided access to anonymity. In addition, a statement from 61 participants was obtained, 37 stated that he felt frustrated when facing Islamophobia's content online and 17 participants said they were bored with anti-Muslim messages and caused emotional fatigue. In this study also obtained the most common description of the response to Islamophobia in Collapsed Contexts is educating (contextualizing), avoiding (avoiding), and ignoring (ignoring).

Twitter succeeded in predicting public-affairs related motivation related to the use of Twitter-Information Seeking, Mobilization, and Public Expression.[4] Opinion Leadership on Twitter succeeded in predicting the involvement of individual opinion leaders in political discussions and political groups. Opinion leaders who use Twitter play an important role in encouraging individuals to participate in public and political processes. Another study was conducted by Yaqub by looking at the participation of citizens in political discourse that occurred on Twitter during the 2016 US President election by analyzing the sentiments and behavior of citizens. From the results of the analysis, overall negative public sentiment was found to the election and in both candidates.[5] Donald Trump has a more positive campaign message than Hillary Clinton, but these messages do not have a significant impact on the sentiment of the political discourse that occurred on Twitter. In user behavior, it is observed that a little original content made during the discussion, most of them only retweet (RT).

The opinion of opinion on social media spread very quickly among social media users throughout Indonesia. Increasingly massive and rapidly spreading the issue is inseparable from the role of social media that is able to provide information quickly and easily to be accessed. Although, it is not certain that the information is true or wrong. A phenomenon known as collective behavior clearly occurs when a mass emergency situation such as social movements in society.[6] This behavior consists of social behavior that includes intensive information search and information transmission.[7] Social media was created by communication technology such as the web and smartphone and making communication itself into an interactive dialogue.[8] Interaction on social media is very distributed, decentralized, and occurs in real time.[9] Social media also helps in carrying out campaigns, such as vaccinations during the Covid 19 pandemic.[10] Social media offers a unique and fast way to spread information, accurate or not, good or bad but information can spread like wild fire.

Twitter is one of the social media used to form public opinion. Twitter is a light conversation service that allows users to post and exchange short messages along 140 characters known as tweets. Although most tweets are conversations and chat, they are also used to share relevant information and report news.[11] One of the most widely used methods to analyze social networks on Twitter is Social Network Analysis (SNA). Through the SNA method, researchers can analyze the pattern of relationships and interactions between social actors to find social structures on social media such as: a central knot that acts as a disseminator of information; leader; connected groups; and patterns of interaction between groups.[12] SNA has been used to study social interaction in various domains. Examples include: collaboration network[13], organizational behavior[14] and many others. In this study, we propose to use SNA in studying narration, communication networks, influential figures and hidden agenda settings from the Twitter user community who spread information after the arrest of three suspected terrorists on November 16, 2021.

However, use of SNA and the narrative analysis so far has not been used for Islamophobic narratives on social media, in the context of Indonesia after the arrest of terrorists. Content and thematic analysis explained about *The.neo* Gramscian counterhegemony and *Communicative actions* that counter trolls take in the framework.[2] SNA was developed to understand the relationships (ties/edges) of the actors (nodes/points) that exist in a system with 2 focuses, namely actors and relationships between actors in a particular social context. This focus helps to understand how the position of

existing actors can affect access to existing resources such as goods, capital, and information.[15]

To find an answer whether the narrative spread on social media was produced naturally or produced for a particular purpose by using SNA, we hope to develop an understanding of the active online community after the arrest of three suspected terrorists on November 16, 2021 and the suspected shooting of terrorists Sunardi on March 9, 2022 by answering the following questions: What narratives are trying to be built from Pro Government and anti-government after the arrest of three suspected terrorists by Detachment 88? How is the communication network on social media Twitter formed after the arrest of three suspected terrorists by Detachment 88? Who is the influential figure of the pro-government and anti-government group in spreading messages related to the arrest of three suspected terrorists by Detachment 88? What is the hidden agenda of the social media movement after the arrest of three suspected terrorists by Detachment 88?

## 2. Methods

This study uses two kinds of research methods, social network analysis and content analysis. Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a tool to map the relationship of important knowledge between individuals.[16] Connection between actors will describe the interaction model built in social networks and know the actors who have an important role in social networks. Narrative analysis focuses on examining the structure, substance, and purpose of narratives in both written and spoken forms of communication.[17] Tweets are collected from Twitter using a specified key word combination. We download tweets (and the meta-data) starting from November 16, 2021. Data is stored in three separate tables from the database for each hashtag. We can only hope to collect sub-sets from tweets and because Twitter only provides the latest tweet, we cannot guarantee that the sample is a good representation of the tweet population. Individual tweets (and meta-data) are described to extract the identity of the current tweet owner, the owner of the tweet that triggers the response, and the URL (compressed) of the link contained in the tweet. Tweets that are not a response to other tweets or do not contain urls are ignored for the purpose of analysis. The software used to do this analysis is netlytic. This web -based application already has generally accepted standard features such as network visualization and programming language -based processing packages. The population of this study is Twitter users who use the keyword Detachment, Farid Okbah

and Sunardi starting from the period of November 16, 2021 depending on the keyword and the context of the ongoing event related to the issue.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Case 1: Farid Okbah

The arrest of Farid Okbah was more identified with the narrative of the issue of #islamphobia and pressure on Islam. Detachment is considered a political tool to weaken Islamic groups and target ulama as a criminalization target. The network that forms a narrative about the Detachment is dominated by pro-government political buzzer groups (@dennysiregar7 (318) @aryprasetyo85 @hanssolo (98), karedokkleunca\_\_\_ (102), and @rd\_4wr1212 (245)). Besides that, the media which as the biggest contribution for this case such as detikcom (17202718), tvOneNews (9222969), kompascom (8262879), VIVAcoiD (4411336), liputan6dotcom (4076967), Kompas TV (3651110), CNNIndonesia (2122859), tempodotco (1903341), okezonenews (1787563), indozonemedia (1774995), republikaonline (1669553), mediaindonesia (1568709), Yahoo\_ID (1372007), and tribunews (1263298).

The arrest of Farid Okbah by Detachment was dominated by #SaminawaathonalBHRS (listen to orders and obey to Habib Rizieq) and #islamphobia. This shows an attempt to accompany the issue of the political narrative of Islamic political groups where they are more controlled by the conversation to defend Farid Okbah. #bravodensus and #BubarkanMUI (Disband Indonesian Council of Ulama) increasingly confirmed the atmosphere because the attack was directed directly to the organization instead of individuals in the organization. So that the polarization of Detachment vs Islam is getting stronger.

The arrest made by the Detachment became a political issue of pressure on Islamic groups, this was compared with law enforcement efforts to KKB in Papua which was considered to have a minimal involvement of the Detachment. So that criticism emerged that the Detachment was a tool of government to criminalize the ulama. This is utilized by radical Islamic groups to glue groups and form consolidation against the actions of the National Police which is considered islamophobia. This issue has the potential to raise an angry mass because MUI and scholars are arrested. This can be seen in the social network map in Figure ?? in the issue of Farid Okbah and Detachment on November 16, 2021.

The social network map three groups (Islamic Group, Aggregator Group, and Pro Government Group) that move the issue of Detachment and Support MUI; Group 1: MCA and Islamic politics dominate the narrative of the conversation about the Detachment. This group's conversation is increasingly solid after the narrative of support for MUI. This group states that this is a war on Muslims; Group 2: Pro-Government Buzzer Group (Denny Siregar) who criticized the MUI with the narrative that the institution had been infiltrated by terrorists and should be dissolved; Group 3: The provocateurs who direct that the issue of Detachment vs MUI, not the Detachment capture JI (terrorist). This group was detected to do a sheep fighting between Islamic political groups and Detachment 88.

The arrest of Farid Okbah and two others turned into political issues, Islamic groups (MUI) vs. Government (Detachment). This arrest issue is directed by the account of the Islamic Political Group (MCAOPS, Maspiyu, Gelora.co, Democrazy etc.) towards the narrative of government intervention to weaken the MUI. This narrative raises the polarization of the MUI supporting group and supporters of the Detachment. The issue experienced a shift no longer the Detachment against JI (terrorist group) but led to the Detachment vs. Islamic Political Group. This narration was built because Ahmad Zain An Najah's identity as one of the MUI members was made the foundation by the pro-government buzzer group to give a statement that the MUI had been infiltrated by terrorists and should be dissolved. This was clashed with the previous issue about the disbanding of the Detachment (voiced by Fadli Zon), so that political pressure was directed at the Detachment and Disbanding MUI. This polarization is increasingly provoking Islamic political groups to fight.

The increase in narration #DUKUNGMUI and the Detachment 88 experienced has the same increase, meaning that when the public talked about the support of MUI while they also talked about the Detachment 88. The increase occurred drastically, on November 16, 2021 the conversation about the support of the MUI and also the Detachment was at 5,000 uploads, the next day rose by 25,000 uploads. That was, there was a massive and structured movement to encourage narration to become a conversation in the public.

On November 17, 2021 the issue was growing from the arrest of Farid Okbah as a suspect in terrorism being the issue of MUI vs. Detachment. Islamic political groups finally used MUI as a justification for government narratives to pressure Islamic political groups using the Detachment. MUI support narrative compared to the Detachment only reaches 3 million accounts. This shows the use of a massive BOT (robot account) to move the issue of Islamic political groups, so they are able to make viral narratives

#dukungMUI and #bubarkanDensus88 to master conversations on social media. After cleaning the data on the conversation data there are only 411 accounts. The response to the issue of Densus is only 16 % of the real account that has a negative view of the arrest of Farid Okbah. This shows that the account of Islamic political groups that master the conversation on Twitter are BOT accounts (robot accounts). Narration of Detachment vs MUI Viral because the potential of the range to this issue reaches 11 million accounts (11,145,846). So that information is very fast spreading and experiencing narrative changes. The response made by the pro-government buzzer group is not quite right and tends to be carried away to the agenda of the provocateurs who seek to direct the narrative that the pro-government group has a mission to demand the dissolution of the MUI.

The dynamics of narrative changes occur quickly, this is a result of the provocateurs who raise the issue of the Detachment which deliberately targets the MUI. As a result, resistance from Islamic political groups was formed with the form of supporting MUI. This issue has become a lighter to clash the Detachment with the MUI so that the context of the involvement of terrorism crime at Farid Okbah is no longer a public discussion. The community is only focused on the polarization of the Pro MUI or Pro Detachment group.

### 3.2. Case 2: Sunardi

There was a significant increase in conversation on the issue of suspected shooting Sunardi terrorists on March 11, 2022. Increasing this issue discusses many shooting of Sunardi not according to procedures and is considered to violate human rights. The increase on the 11th occurred because a number of political figures (Fadli Zon, Dr. Eva etc.) and the opposition buzzer raised the profile of Dr. Sunardi and called for #Prayfordoktersunardi (Pray for Doctor Sunardi).

Public position in this issue tends to be negative towards the government in this case Detachment 88. Buzzer which focuses on humanitarian issues is quite attracting the attention of the community. In this case, there was also a framing that was carried out on Sunardi that he could not be a suspect. This is based on his profession as a doctor and several humanitarian activities carried out by him. Besides discussing the background of Sunardi. The buzzer also comparable the case of this shooting with several cases that are considered related to the densus such as the handling of separatist movements in Papua by the Armed Criminal Group (KKB). Many social media citizens feel that the Detachment takes improper actions and doubts the quality of Detachment 88. The role



of buzzer who is pro to the Detachment, has difficulty in carrying out a counterattack on the narratives built by the buzzer cons. Detachment about the events at Sunardi's shooting in Sukoharjo. The narrative built by the buzzer who is contra to the densus is quite varied. The discussion about cases of human rights violations committed by Detachment of Sunardi is quite attractive to the attention of social media, very many narratives that eventually berate the Detachment that leads to wild narratives such as dissolution, performance evaluation and auditing sources of Detachment funds. From the Pro Detachment camp, it still builds a narrative of justification for Detachment's actions in Sunardi's shooting. Both parties are also enough to discuss the personality of Sunardi to strengthen the narration built by both.

The results of the mapping of social networks from conversations (both Pro Government Group and Anti-Government Group) about Sunardi and Detachment 88 are seen balanced in communication between the pro-densus buzzer groups and the opposition group buzzer. After structuring the data it can be seen that communication is caught by the opposition buzzer group with a massive network in the general public. The issue of Sunardi's defense increased and the main network was formed in the framework of accusing the government as a regime that was wrong with Islam. Account with username @faktaidn\_ is the most reference account on the issue of Sunardi. This account is a media account that provides information about the issue. The cons of a cons of the Detachment become a many reference account before. This means that the issue of Sunardi's shooting is quite controlled by the counter -party of Detachment 88.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the results of research that had been explained previously, several conclusions were obtained. Islamic political groups that are anti -government (opposition) are currently trying to make a narrative that the Indonesian Islamic Government is by utilizing the momentum of suspected terrorist arrests in Farid Okbah and Sunardi by Detachment 88. They shift the issue of terrorist arrest Government of Detachment 88 Anti-Terror. This can be seen from the use of BOT (Robot Account) in raising the Narrative #Bubarkandensus88 and #DUKATUI to be viral on social media. The government also uses the same way to use bots in raising the hashtag #Bunjaramui but the number is defeated by the opposition group. The social network map shows three groups engaged in the arrest of suspected terrorists Farid Okbah and Sunardi, ther are 1)Muslim Cyber Army (MCA) group and Islamic politics dominate the narrative of the conversation about the Detachment. This group's conversation is increasingly solid after the narrative of

support for MUI. This group states that this is a war on Muslims; 2) Pro-Government Buzzer Group (Denny Siregar) who criticized the MUI with the narrative that the institution had been infiltrated by terrorists and should be dissolved; 3) The provocateurs who direct that the issue of Detachment vs MUI, not the Detachment capture JI (terrorist).

The arrest of Farid Okbah and two others turned into political issues, Islamic groups (MUI) vs. Government (Detachment). The issue of this arrest is directed by the account of the Islamic Political Group (MCAOPS, MASPIYU, GELORA.CO, DEMOCRAZY etc.) to the Narrative of Government Interventions to weaken the MUI, whereas in the arrest of suspected terrorists Sunardi the account that gets the most references from other accounts is @fakakaidn affiliated with Islamist group. While the network that formed a narrative about Detachment was dominated by pro -government political buzzer groups ( @dennysiregar7 @aryprasetyo85 @hanssolo karedokkleunca\_\_\_ @rd\_4wr1212). The arrest of Farid Okbah by Detachment 88 was dominated by #saminawaathonaibhrs and #islamphobia, while the dominant narrative after the suspected arrest of Sunardi's suspected terrorists namely #PKitkunkapuBuan and #DUKANMUI, both of these things showed an effort to accompany the issue to the political narrative of the opposition group to weaken the government with the narrative that Discriminated government of Islamic groups.

## 5. Limitations

This research draws conclusions from the narrative and network that occurred after the arrest of suspected terrorists, not from the facts or legal processes imposed on the suspected terrorists, therefore this study needs to be followed by the facts of the trial of the suspected terrorists to become increasingly clear that The government arrested suspected terrorists not on the basis of Islamophobia.

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