



## INFLUENCE COVID-19 DISINFORMATION AGAINST PANIC-BUYING ATTITUDES IN FAMILY WHATSAPP GROUPS

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to determine how much influence the distribution of disinformation in the family WhatsApp group has on the panic-buying attitude of middle-aged housewives in South Jakarta. With the rise of panic-buying actions that occurred during the period leading up to the strict PSBB period in April 2020, researchers wanted to see if there was an influence on the use of social media, especially WhatsApp, which had increased since this pandemic happened. The method used in this research is quantitative with an explanatory type. Information Integration Theory from Martin Fishbein is the theory chosen by the researcher in this research. The sample in this study amounted to 204 middle-aged housewives living in South Jakarta, which were divided based on the proportion per district using a purposive sampling technique. This study found a strong relationship and influence between the distribution of disinformation in the family whatsapp group and the panic-buying attitude of middle-aged housewives in South Jakarta. The dimensions of the theory used by researchers, namely the valence and weight of information on disinformation messages, were found to have a strong relationship and influence with the panic-buying attitude of middle-aged housewives in South Jakarta. The government and the public often pay more attention to the spread of disinformation messages to prevent emotional contagion that leads to panic-buying in South Jakarta. The dimensions of the theory used by researchers, namely the valence and weight of information on disinformation messages, were found to have a strong relationship and influence with the panic-buying attitude of middle-aged housewives in South Jakarta. The government and the public often pay more attention to the spread of disinformation messages to prevent emotional contagion that leads to panic-buying in South Jakarta. The dimensions of the theory used by researchers, namely the valence and weight of information on disinformation messages, were found to have a strong relationship and influence with the panic-buying attitude of middle-aged housewives in South Jakarta. The government and the public often pay more attention to the spread of disinformation messages to prevent emotional contagion that leads to panic-buying in South Jakarta.*

**Keywords:** *Disinformation Messages, Information Integration Theory, Panic-buying, Social Media*

## INTRODUCTION

In this digital era, social media use has increased rapidly. This relates to the need for information and communication, which is increasingly high. Hootsuite once surveyed the development of social media in Indonesia, totaling 170 million in total or around 61.8% of the Indonesian population calculated as of January 2021, coupled with internet usage of 202.6 million users or about 73.7% of the whole Indonesian population. It is not surprising that, eventually, social media has become a trend initiated by many large companies in conveying information with various objectives, given the rapid development of information media in Indonesia itself (Hootsuite (We Are Social), 2021).

More specifically, Hootsuite also released an infographic showing that the most used social media is YouTube with users of around 93.8% of the entire population of Indonesia, followed by Whatsapp with users of 87.7% of the whole population of Indonesia. Then there are several applications such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, Line, and many more. From the data above, we can see that more than 90% of Indonesian people have been exposed to the current amount of information on social media. Here are some pictures from Hootsuite.



Figure 1.1 Use of Indonesian Social Media (Hootsuite (We Are Social), 2021)

Information on social media is very satisfying for users to find the information their users need. Rohmah added that information on social media could also be faster than information broadcast on mass media (Rohmah, 2020). Then, with the convenience offered and the fullness of information during the advancement of technology, the older generation who have a different mindset from the younger generation are more easily exposed to disinformation where currently, the digital world has its own rules of the game. The essential difference is that the younger generation is more concerned with accuracy, while the older generation prioritizes speed (Hasan, 2019). With the amount of information circulating in the community and with the facilities that are always offered by this social media,

We know that in recent years we have been hit by an international pandemic where we have to deal with an epidemic called Covid-19. This hinders all aspects of running in our lives and even makes many new regulations appear, such as PSBB, Social Distancing, and many more. Many people and even the government need help to balance their activities on the sidelines of their constraints in the meeting, which ultimately increases the use of social media. This causes the amount of information circulating on social media to cause an infodemic. Infodemic is a condition in which a lot of information whose accuracy is still

questionable during a pandemic is coupled with the rapid rate of information on several channels or media (Insani, 2021).

The mass media and social media can, of course be used by various groups, especially the government, in disseminating important news about the handling of Covid-19. Social media and mass media are efficient and influential places in spreading this beneficial call when a pandemic hits Indonesia (Romli, 2021). Maybe this global pandemic can be said to be a pandemic that has suddenly come and makes people still unable to understand the importance of maintaining health protocols and carrying out handling as early as possible, therefore the government should be able to take a different role regarding mass media and social media in disseminating news and various suggestions to deal with this international scale pandemic (Romli, 2021).

The rapid flow of information and communication on social media, which should be a weapon for handling Covid-19, has instead turned into the spread of errors or misunderstandings in scattered data, mostly found on social media. These news stories sometimes make social media users feel confused and uneasy about whether the information they receive is true or false. Most of them don't act wisely and instead support the spread of disinformation. Not infrequently, there are even some individuals who are easily provoked by incorrect information and instead think that the information is accurate and feel that this information must be defended (Komarudin & Khoiruddin, 2016).

In addition, the large wave of information that occurred, such as information leaks in the form of rumors during the Covid-19 pandemic, has become a phenomenon on various social media platforms today. A large wave of information that has not been validated is increasingly creating emotional contagion that can be activated digitally through today's social media. This emotional reasoning will later develop into an unwise action which will result in the spread of news in the form of rumors which will result in more widespread emotional contagion (Mheidly & Fares, 2020).

In addition, the increasing practice of social media exacerbates the situation where a survey said that audiences trust news that they receive from people they know and trust, even if it beats a credible source. The audience seems as if the identity of the disinformation spreader has deceived them. Now people pay more attention to who is sharing information rather than seeing where they got the information which makes today's media relational (Imaduddin, 2018).

With the rise of disinformation messages circulating on the sidelines of the enormous wave of information that occurs, it is found that the spread of hoaxes or other disinformation spreads is more likely to be spread by parents, as is often done by mothers through chat with forwarding origin without reading first with an age range. Forty-five years and over (Reza, 2018). This can be related to the use of social media, especially social media which prioritizes text message features, especially WhatsApp, which is one of the places for spreading disinformation messages that cannot be stopped, which is in line with the data found that the use of social media, especially Whatsapp, which we know has a two-way messaging system. It continues to grow day by day, even from the beginning of the pandemic until now, the use of the application has increased very drastically from 27% to 40% of its users, which can be said to be almost half. The use of Whatsapp has, of course increased after the implementation of the lockdown or PSBB to continue to be connected with relatives and family during the

PSBB period. This was shown in a survey conducted by the Kantar Consulting Firm (Burhan, 2020).

It was also found that a survey was in line with that conducted by katadata.co.id which said that Indonesian mothers spend an average of 2-3 hours using social media applications and instant messaging, where the largest number is WhatsApp with 96% gain, followed by Instagram (95%) and Facebook (85%). This shows how enthusiastic mothers are starting to switch and use social media applications and instant messaging, especially WhatsApp (Lidwina, 2021).

From these data, it can be said that the spike in the use of social media, especially Whatsapp, which is seen to be increasing rapidly, also has an impact on the spread of disinformation on the platform—also quoted from data compiled by the Indonesian Anti-Defamation Society (Mafindo), which said that hoaxes or the spread of disinformation originating from private messaging applications were very difficult to trace. Their diary notes show around 11-15% per day of reported disinformation. But they believe that there is more to the spread of disinformation than this (Pertiwi, 2020).

Seeing the widespread spread of disinformation on social media platforms which is increasing and getting bigger, has also resulted in further dishonorable actions, one of which is panic-buying. Seeing an urgent need, researchers try to discuss this panic-buying phenomenon and try to relate it to the use of social media, especially WhatsApp in the context of the increasing dissemination of disinformation messages during this pandemic.

Similar studies have been carried out by many researchers before. Research has found that PSBB, social media, and massive food purchases are connected. His journal found that social media became a medium for disseminating advice and documentaries, which caused panic before the lockdown period and led to buying groceries online (Laguna et al., 2020).

*Panic-buying* is a phenomenon that has occurred and developed since the rampant Covid-19 pandemic in various parts of the world, especially Indonesia. Media on multiple aspects of the world also reported that almost 82% of the reports presented the causes of panic-buying, while almost 80% covered the effects. About 25.7% of reports highlighted rumors about panic-buying, and only 9.3% of reports blamed the government. Only 27.1% report describing corrective actions, 30.8% report providing news about the psychology behind panic-buying, and 67.3% of news featuring an empty shelf image (Arafat et al., 2020). He added that general disinformation messages on social media seem to force people to panic-buying themselves. The sudden spread of rumors and misinformation led to the development of negative emotions among the people who ultimately decided to make a change in panic-buying attitudes. Spreading photos of empty shelves that are rampant, and abuse of social media, such as blaming the public, government, or companies by dramatizing panic-buying and as if predicting that goods will be empty shortly are substantial factors that make panic-buying carried out by the wider community (Arafat et al. , 2020).

This is also supported by other results which say that panic-buying is an attitude that appears to accompany increasing public anxiety during the Covid-19 pandemic. This panic-buying of various goods occurred due to the instability of the socio-economic situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic (Indah & Muqsith, 2021). He also added that the instability of the case during a pandemic either because of declining health or because of the large amount of misinformation and accumulation of content caused panic-buying of goods to spread and

spread in various places. This is also what makes researchers see interesting data that can be examined further in this study regarding other causes of panic-buying itself.

Several other studies also support the same thing, where the panic-buying that occurred in many countries during the Covid-19 pandemic was rooted in reflective thinking in society. It can be explained that panic-buying is a response to stimuli caused by many things such as social norms and even social media. The continuous scarcity of goods, anxiety, fear and signals from social media through spreading news cause panic-buying in various countries, including Indonesia. It goes on to say that affective responses (in the form of emotions that arise) will lead to changes in attitudes to make massive buying decisions or panic-buying (Li et al., 2021).

Similar studies have also been conducted on Malaysians, panic-buying also occurred there and had a terrible impact on the food supply system and the supply of other goods at that time. Anxiety at that time became a frightening specter that caused panic-buying to occur in many places at that time. The transmission of anxiety cannot be separated from the role of social media through the many disinformation messages spread there. The transmission of anxiety makes panic-buying attitudes spread quickly. But the government can suppress this by making people calm and not feel anxious anymore by using social media in an appropriate and efficient way (Omar et al., 2021).

The author of this research uses a theory called Information Integration Theory, which discusses the organization of information or messages put forward by Martin Fishbein. This theory has the assumption that "The theoretical approach to combining information for communicators is centered on how we accumulate and organize information about all people, objects, situations, or ideas that shape attitudes or tendencies to act positively or negatively towards these objects" (Littlejohn & Foss, 2016)

This theory cannot be separated from the important role of two dimensions in this theory: Valence and Information Weight. Valence refers to whether the beliefs held by the receiver are consistent with the information they have just received. When information is in line with your ideas, it can be said that the information has a positive valence, but when your beliefs are not in line with the information you have just received, it is said that the information has a negative valence. Then the second dimension is the weight of information, which is a function of the credibility of news or information. If you receive information and think it is true, then the weight of the information is high.

This Information Integration Theory also says that changes in attitude due to the emergence of new information and shaking beliefs cause changes in attitudes in individuals. Valence affects how information affects your belief system and weight affects how much influence it has on you and your beliefs (Littlejohn & Foss, 2016). The valence of this research focuses on aligning disinformation messages that are spread in family WhatsApp groups with the beliefs they already have rooted in the large wave of information on social media since the Covid-19 pandemic entered Indonesia.

As previously mentioned, Information Integration Theory discusses information about a change in attitude that occurs. This attitude will later become an important aspect of this research. Attitude can be interpreted as a feeling or affection, thought or cognition, and action or conation about a person towards an aspect that occurs in the surrounding environment. It can also be said that attitude is a response that will only arise when humans are faced with a particular stimulus which will eventually cause a reaction against the individual (Azwar, 1995).

Attitude can be learned, even formed, because that attitude has motivational qualities that can encourage individuals to carry out certain behaviors. Attitudes will easily shape behavior that was originally developed from experience or information obtained from other people in the mass media. In addition, attitudes are also said to occur based on a directed situation or changes (SE Putri, 2019).

In this study, the attitude component consists of three components, namely cognitive which is beliefs and ideas of thought, affective, which concerns the feelings of an object that has to do with individual emotions, and conative, which involves the tendency of an individual to take action or decision. Towards the thing they receive as the goal of the object. (Paramita, 2014)

This attitude will later be associated with Information Integration Theory, where this characteristic refers to changes in panic-buying behavior that have often occurred recently. Cognitive perspective will refer to people's knowledge about the panic-buying action, affective attitude will refer to the emotional influence of the community related to panic-buying, and conative attitude will refer to changes in people's behavior in choosing to carry out the panic-buying action caused by the disinformation messages they receive, on their family whatsapp group.

## **METHOD**

The author uses a quantitative approach in this study. Whereas we know that this approach is an approach that deals with data in the form of numbers and analysis using statistical calculations. Then the type of research used by researchers is explanatory research or what we know as descriptive research. This explanatory research explains the position of the variables studied and the relationship between one variable and another through testing the hypotheses formulated. Explanative research formats can also explain a relationship or influence of two or more variables (Sugiyono, 2013).

The researchers define the objects or participants here are middle-aged housewives in South Jakarta with middle and upper economic status. In this study, researchers wanted to research how much influence the spread of disinformation about Covid-19 had on panic-buying attitudes ahead of the strict PSBB period among middle-aged housewives in South Jakarta. The research period that the researcher wants is March 1, 2020 – April 9, 2020 (before the PSBB was carried out on April 10, 2020) because on that date a lot of panic-buying appeared and it was indicated that it had a relationship with the spread of disinformation about Covid-19 which was spread on family WhatsApp groups.

Researchers want to research objects housewives with various in-depth considerations. Housewives were taken because, according to (Astuti, 2013) every housewife always has an awareness of her role as a caretaker of the necessities of life in the family, including buying basic daily needs, which makes housewives closer to action. panic-buying. The relationship between housewives and the increase in whatsapp is also a factor for researchers to use housewives and use instant messaging social media, namely WhatsApp, because it is in line with data from (TheAsianparent, 2021) which says that media preferences move a lot during the pandemic, where 50% of mothers start leaving tv and moving on to OTT-based instant messaging applications including whatsapp.

The age range chosen by the researcher also has its objectives. Researchers determined the age range of 45-55 years because it was found that Kominfo analysis data

stated that hoax spreaders or other disinformation spreads are more likely to be spread by parents, as is done by many mothers via chat with origin forward without reading first, with an age range of 45 years and above (Reza, 2018). The location of South Jakarta was also chosen by the researchers because there have been at least three times the biggest panic-buying has occurred due to panic about this pandemic and issues regarding the PSBB, where the date of occurrence is March 2, 2020, March 14 2020 and March 19, 2020, with an average period of 3 days that took place in South Jakarta, to be precise, Grand Lucky, SCBD and several other shopping centers in South Jakarta (CA Putri, 2020).

The data collection technique that the writer uses is a non-probability sampling technique with purposive sampling. Nonprobability sampling does not provide opportunities for all elements in a population (Sugiyono, 2013). While purposive sampling is carried out by researchers because this technique only includes people with specific criteria in accordance with the research objectives. The sample used by the researcher at this time was 204 married middle-aged housewives who live in South Jakarta using the proportion per district.

## **DISCUSSION**

This research took place in South Jakarta by looking at middle-aged and married housewives. Where researchers have distributed questionnaires/questions in *offline* as well as online which uses paper as well as Google Forms. The number of questions listed on the form both offline and online is 19 questions, namely seven questions used to measure variable X and 12 questions to measure variable Y which the researchers selected using the Validity Test and also the Reliability Test on these questions.

Researchers have determined the characteristics that researchers want in this study. Researchers wish to female respondents with married status with an age range of 45-55 years and domiciled in South Jakarta with the proportion of sub-districts divided. Here the researcher also has other special characteristics, such as the monthly family income, where the researcher wants the monthly income to be above Rp. 1,500,000.00 so that it can be said that the family can take action to purchase goods here in a panic-buying condition. But here, the researcher still questions this in the questionnaire to be more selective in capturing incoming data so that it still matches the characteristics of the data that the researcher wants. Researchers distributed questionnaires to respondents and received positive feedback from respondents, where researchers got more data than the specified target. Here the researcher obtained 240 respondents with details of 225 obtained from the online form and 15 obtained from the offline form where the researcher only needed 204 respondents.

The districts where the respondents lived, there were many respondents who felt the spread of disinformation influenced their panic-buying behavior, most of which were in the Sunday Market with 42 respondents or 17.5% of the total 240 respondents followed by Jagakarsa and Cilandak 13.3%, then Pesanggrahan, Kebayoran Baru, Tebet, and Mampang Prapatan with 9.2% and ended respectively by Pancoran and Setiabudi with 6.3% and 4.6% gains. Here the researcher concludes that the respondents are spread over many sub-districts in South Jakarta with the highest percentage falling to Pasar Minggu and Jagakarsa.

Table 1. Correlation Test

		Correlations		
			Pesan Disinformasi	Sikap Panic Buying
Spearman's rho	Pesan Disinformasi	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.872**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	204	204
	Sikap Panic Buying	Correlation Coefficient	.872**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	204	204

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Calculations in table 1 above, where it is shown at a significance value of 0.000 which is referred to as smaller than ( $<$ ) 0.05, so that it can be said that the two variables correlate. We can also see in the table that the value of the correlation coefficient is 0.872 between the two variables. Because this value lies between 0.71 - 0.90, it can be said that variable X (Disinformation Messages on Family Whatsapp Groups) with variable Y (panic-buying Attitude) has a strong influence in a positive (+) direction. So indirectly, a high influence/relationship has been seen between Disinformation Messages on the Family Whatsapp Group and panic-buying Attitudes.

Table 2. Determination Coefficient Test

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.886 <sup>a</sup>	.786	.784	4.403

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pesan Disinformasi

b. Dependent Variable: Sikap Panic Buying

Then this second table shows that a correlation value is obtained or  $r = 0.886$ . After calculating by squaring and multiplying by 100%, the researcher gets a correlation value or (r square) of 78.4%. From these results, researchers can conclude that the effect of variable X (disinformation messages on family WhatsApp groups) on variable Y (attitude of panic-buying) is 78.4%, and the remaining value of 21.6% is based on the influence of other factors outside of the study.

Based on the two data above, the researcher also realized that the phenomenon of massive buying of goods or what we know as panic-buying itself at that time was an activity that occurred in various parts of the world including Indonesia, especially South Jakarta. Undeniably, the scarcity of goods ahead of the strict PSBB period is a frightening specter, coupled with the widespread disinformation that occurs on all kinds of social media platforms that we use, especially WhatsApp. Therefore the researchers tried to look at this phenomenon and wanted to relate it to the Information Integration theory used in this study with 204 unmarried housewife respondents in South Jakarta. As a theory that researchers describe



from the start,

Apart from this and referring to the two tables shown, there is a strong relationship and a high influence between Disinformation Messages in the Family Whatsapp Group and panic-buying Attitudes. This is clearly illustrated in the SPSS table through the correlation and coefficient of determination tests.

This high relationship is due to disinformation messages in the family's WhatsApp group presenting messages regarding Covid-19, PSBB, and specifically, the panic-buying itself sent through the people closest to the message recipient. Another thing that makes this message so believable is that there are impact news, suggestions, or even solutions offered by the contents of the disinformation message that it is not even known where it comes from and how accurate the news is. The amalgamation of many of these things ultimately forms a positive valence towards the panic-buying attitude of middle-aged housewives who live in South Jakarta. This is also supported by the explanation we read from information integration theory, which says that positive information valence can be an indication of how it can change a person's attitude. The set of disinformation messages they receive will slowly accumulate and will certainly affect their beliefs slowly too.

The accuracy of the information that was not guaranteed to be a source of information at that time also made the atmosphere even murkier. The weight of the information, or the contents of the presentation made the respondents believe and finally decide to change their attitude to panic-buying at that moment. This can be seen in table 2, which shows that Disinformation Messages in the Family Whatsapp Group influenced panic-buying Attitudes.

Departing from the theory that the author uses, namely Information Integration theory, it is said that information can change attitudes depending on valence and weight. Valence is the extent to which information supports respondents' beliefs and weight is a function of the credibility of information (Littlejohn & Foss, 2016).

While the weight of information is the credibility or the content of a statement, clarity, accuracy, and relevance of information are three important components that build from the importance of the data itself. Clarity is when information explains the impact of a problem and provides solutions in it, accuracy is where information includes knowledge and understanding and sources are also considered. Relevance is when information is focused on an issue and relates to respondents or the public. Ashari et al., 2018).

Based on the author's results and statistical calculations through a questionnaire distributed in South Jakarta, it was found that a high relationship and high influence were also shown in Variable X, namely disinformation messages in the family whatsapp group towards Variable Y, namely panic-buying attitudes.

The author thinks that this high relationship can occur because of the growth of WhatsApp as a social media platform which has been getting bigger during the pandemic, becoming one of the social media of choice for the public to spread news that is considered important at that time without looking at the truth and accuracy of the news first. The government's delay in dealing with the high number of Covid cases at that time was also an influential factor. The positive valence towards disinformation messages in the WhatsApp family group just appeared, considering that many people began to lose faith in the government due to the delay in response, causing the public's trust at that time to shift to news from those closest to them. This positive valence is one of two major factors that are indicated to change a person's attitude. Then the disinformation received by the communicant will

accumulate and will produce responses in line with the beliefs that have been formed from the start.

The weight of information is the second factor that can change attitudes and support valence. Bringing up impacts, solutions, fears, and motivations or directions are the main factors of a news story that are considered by respondents to have high weight. In addition, the distribution on behalf of experts or spread through the people closest to us makes the weight of the information more highly valued by the recipient of the communication. These two factors ultimately make people experience a change in attitude to panic-buying. This is in line with many previous studies such as research conducted by Laguna, who examined the impact of Covid 19, the Lockdown, and the importance of food in her journal entitled "The impact of COVID-19 lockdown on food priorities. Results from a preliminary study using social media and an online survey with Spanish consumers". The results of this study concluded that PSBB, social media, and purchasing goods in large quantities were interrelated, he found the fact that social media became a means and spread of documentaries which caused panic before the lockdown period which led to online food purchases. This was also explained by the researchers that the misinformation and disinformation that always occurs on social media make food purchases continue to occur and become a prolonged crisis because it is difficult to control (Laguna et al., 2020). he found it was the fact that social media became a vehicle and the dissemination of documentaries that caused the pre-lockdown panic that led to online food purchases. The researchers also explained that the misinformation and disinformation that always occurs on social media make food purchases continue and become a prolonged crisis because it is difficult to control (Laguna et al., 2020). he found it was the fact that social media became a vehicle and the dissemination of documentaries that caused the pre-lockdown panic that led to online food purchases. This was also explained by the researchers that the misinformation and disinformation that always occurs on social media make food purchases continue to occur and become a prolonged crisis because it is difficult to control (Laguna et al., 2020).

The same thing is also shown in Yanuarita and Haryati where they discuss topics that are almost in line with what researchers are currently doing and have results that mutually support one another. In his journal, he explained that Covid-19 had a considerable impact or influence on the socio-cultural conditions in the city of Malang. He said that the PSBB and the pandemic were the main factors causing the socio-cultural and economic conditions of the community to receive their impacts. panic-buying, mass panic, scarcity of goods, and excess anxiety also increased rapidly (Yanuarita & Haryati, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

Based on some data and results and discussion described by the author, it can be concluded that disinformation messages in the WhatsApp family group have a high and positive relationship and influence on attitudes *panic-buying* married middle-aged housewife in South Jakarta. That's because the information is in line with the respondents' beliefs and has a high weight in the content of the message.

Weight and valence are the two main factors that cause a change in attitude to occur, this change in attitude occurs because the positive valence is indicated by the confidence of the respondents and the high weight is marked by the completeness of the contents of the

disinformation presentation that appears in the family whatsapp group at that time where it is clear, accuracy, and relevance of the news significantly affect the weight of the information. The research data that researchers got in the field is that the majority of respondents agree with the linkage and influence between disinformation messages regarding Covid-19 in the family WhatsApp group. But this is only a positive outcome for some parties. This is shown because of the impacts caused by the spread of disinformation itself which did not have a good effect, instead it created a lot of chaos in parts of the world, as explained in several previous studies that researchers had touched on. So it's suitable for the elements involved to start being sensitive to these distributions.

The author also found that the researchers summarized the research data in the field, which showed that high levels of anticipatory action were taken without knowing whether the news they read was accurate. The researcher advises the government to start promoting the anti-hoax movement to help people out there to seek clarity, and also for the public to always be patient and re-check the news before taking preventive action so as not to cause a chain reaction like panic-buying.

In addition, the low literacy in reading and finding out the truth of a news item among the respondents in this study. The researcher suggests that the government and the public start promoting information literacy and spreading informative news far from hoaxes and disinformation.

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