

Tabayyun's Urgency on the 2025 Sumatra Flood Hoax News on the TikTok Platform

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Abstract

The development of social media, especially TikTok, has made it easier for people to obtain and disseminate information, including information about disasters. However, this convenience also increases the spread of unverified information, causing hoaxes. This study aims to analyze the urgency of tabayyun to information related to the 2025 Sumatra flood circulating on the TikTok platform and examine its relationship with digital literacy. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a content analysis method. Data was obtained through observation and documentation of TikTok content that was purposively selected based on its suitability with the focus of the research. The results of the study show that content that does not have a clear source of information is still found as well as visual content that is indicated using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology without explanation of its visual authenticity. These findings show the importance of verifying the source, content, and context of information before it is trusted or disseminated. In addition, this study shows that the principle of tabayyun is related to digital literacy because it both emphasizes the ability to examine information sources, verify, think critically, and consider the impact of information before making decisions. Therefore, tabayyun can be one of the guidelines in strengthening people's digital literacy to deal with the spread of disinformation on social media, especially in disaster situations.

Keywords: Tabayyun, Hoax, Digital literacy, TikTok, Sumatra Flood 2025.

Abstrak

Perkembangan media sosial, khususnya TikTok, telah memudahkan masyarakat memperoleh dan menyebarkan informasi, termasuk informasi tentang bencana. Namun, kemudahan ini juga meningkatkan penyebaran informasi yang belum terverifikasi sehingga memunculkan hoaks. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis urgensi tabayyun terhadap informasi terkait banjir Sumatra 2025 yang beredar di platform TikTok serta mengkaji keterkaitannya dengan literasi digital. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan metode analisis isi. Data diperoleh melalui observasi dan dokumentasi konten TikTok yang dipilih secara purposif berdasarkan kesesuaiannya dengan fokus penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masih ditemukan konten yang tidak memiliki sumber informasi yang jelas serta konten visual yang terindikasi menggunakan teknologi Artificial Intelligence (AI) tanpa penjelasan mengenai keaslian visualnya. Temuan ini menunjukkan pentingnya memverifikasi sumber, isi, dan konteks informasi sebelum dipercaya atau disebarluaskan. Selain itu, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa prinsip tabayyun berkaitan dengan literasi digital karena keduanya menekankan kemampuan meneliti sumber informasi, melakukan verifikasi, berpikir kritis, dan mempertimbangkan dampak informasi sebelum mengambil keputusan. Oleh karena itu, tabayyun dapat menjadi salah satu pedoman dalam memperkuat literasi digital masyarakat untuk menghadapi penyebaran disinformasi di media sosial, terutama dalam situasi bencana.

Kata kunci: Tabayyun, hoaks, literasi digital, TikTok, Banjir Sumatra 2025

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in the digital era has brought significant changes in the pattern of information dissemination in society. This condition makes social media the primary source of information, including during disasters such as floods in Sumatra at the end of 2025. However, the ease of access to this information also has implications for the increasing spread of unverified information or hoaxes, especially through the TikTok platform, which has fast, massive, and visual-based characteristics (Sinaga & Azhar, 2025)

TikTok as a social media has a strategic role in shaping public opinion because of its ability to disseminate information quickly and widely with a high level of user engagement. Viral content often does not go through an adequate verification process, so it has the potential to cause misinformation in the community. By the end of 2025, a lot of content about the Sumatra flood disaster will go viral on TikTok, showing a tendency to spread information without clear sources or hoaxes (Faradila et al., 2025)

Hoaxes are information that is not in accordance with the facts and is spread with a certain purpose, whether intentional or not. Various unverified content, such as exaggerated information on the number of victims, erroneous location of incidents, videos that are indicated to use AI, to old videos that are claimed to be the latest events, circulate massively and have the potential to cause confusion of information, increase psychological anxiety in the public, trigger social conflicts through provocative narratives, and encourage decision-making that is not based on information that has been verified. These conditions can hinder the effectiveness of disaster communication and overall disaster management efforts. (Djulian et al., 2024) said that panic appears in the form of increasing public fear and anxiety about flood conditions that can cause misunderstandings, worsening the psychological atmosphere of victims and the surrounding community. (Santoso et al., 2025) explained that the divisions that arise cause conflicts between individuals or groups and strengthen sentiments of hatred and discrimination in certain groups that divide harmony to hinder the disaster management process. This phenomenon shows that in disaster situations, people tend to trust and disseminate

information more easily without an adequate clarification process. Research shows that the spread of hoaxes in the context of flood disasters often stems from low media literacy and high levels of social media use, thereby accelerating the virality of inaccurate information (Hafit et al., 2026). Therefore, the issue of hoaxes in the 2025 Sumatra flood news emphasizes the importance of information verification (*tabayyun*) as a preventive effort to minimize the impact of disinformation in the community.

Tabayyun is a principle in Islam that emphasizes the importance of verifying information before it is received or disseminated. This principle is explicitly mentioned in Surah Al-Hujurat verse 6, which teaches Muslims to be careful of information that comes from unclear sources. In the digital context, *tabayyun* is the foundation of relevant communication ethics to overcome the spread of hoaxes on social media (Abbas & Mz, 2025). The concept of *tabayyun* in Islam teaches the importance of clarifying and verifying information before taking a stance on news so as not to cause negative impacts due to errors in receiving news. *Tabayyun* is also in line with the concept of digital literacy; according to (Trisna & Batubara, 2025) digital literacy is not only related to the ability to access digital technology, but also the ability to understand, evaluate, and utilize information critically and responsibly. Digital literacy is an important skill in dealing with the rapid flow of information on social media, especially to identify and verify potentially hoax information before it is disseminated.

This research is based on the researcher's observation that many news items indicated by hoaxes related to the Sumatra flood disaster at the end of 2025 are circulating on the TikTok platform; the researcher realizes the need to be literate and *tabayyun* to prevent and reduce the spread of hoax news. One of the relevant studies is a study (Sinaga & Azhar, 2025) that found that media literacy plays an important role in helping students to respond to hoax news on social media. The research shows that the ability to verify information sources can reduce the risk of spreading hoaxes. Furthermore, research (Putri et al., 2024) related to the concept of *tabayyun* in surah Al-Hujurat in responding to hoax news explains that the concept of *tabayyun* in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6 is relevant to be used as a guideline in responding to hoax news in the digital era. The

research emphasizes the importance of examining the source and validity of information before making a decision.

Previous research has generally discussed the concept of *tabayyun* in the context of social media in general or on specific platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, and emphasized the importance of media literacy in warding off hoaxes (Putri et al., 2024). The novelty of this research lies in the integration between the analysis of disaster hoaxes on the TikTok platform, visual phenomena indicated by Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the concept of *tabayyun* from the perspective of QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6. Previous research has generally discussed *tabayyun* as an Islamic communication ethics in the context of social media in general or focused on text-based hoaxes. Meanwhile, this study specifically examines how AI-indicated provocative and visual narratives are used in disseminating information related to flood disasters and analyzes them using the *tabayyun* stages according to Buya Hamka. Thus, this research not only places *tabayyun* as a religious normative concept, but also as an analytical framework to understand the challenges of digital disinformation in the era of artificial intelligence.

This research has a high urgency because the phenomenon of spreading unverified information (hoaxes) on social media, especially TikTok, is increasing along with the intensity of use of the platform by the public. In a disaster situation such as the flood in Sumatra in 2025, inaccurate information has the potential to cause public panic, wrong decision-making, and hinder the disaster management process. This condition is exacerbated by the low digital literacy of people who are not able to sort information critically.

This study aims to analyze the urgency of applying the *tabayyun* principle in responding to the spread of Sumatra flood news in 2025 circulating on the TikTok platform, with reference to the perspective of the Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 6. This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of *tabayyun* studies as a framework for information verification in the digital era and enrich the study of hoaxes and disinformation on social media. Practically, this research can be a reference for the public in applying the *tabayyun* principle when receiving and disseminating information on social media,

especially related to disaster content that contains provocative and visual narratives indicated using *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) technology.

This research is important because it has significance in raising awareness to check the truth of information before receiving or disseminating it, especially in disaster situations that are vulnerable to the spread of disinformation. This study aims to analyze how the application of the *tabayyun* principle in responding to the spread of the Sumatra flood hoax news in 2025 circulating on the TikTok platform, by referring to the perspective of the Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 6. This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of *tabayyun* studies as a framework for information verification in the digital era and enrich the study of hoaxes and disinformation on social media. Practically, this research can be a reference for the public in applying the *tabayyun* principle when receiving and disseminating information on social media, especially related to disaster content that contains provocative and visual narratives indicated using *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) technology.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Previous studies have examined the concept of *tabayyun* as an approach to addressing the spread of misinformation on digital media. Saidah (2023) explained that *tabayyun*, based on Tafsir Al-Azhar, encourages Muslims to verify the source and accuracy of information before believing or disseminating it. Similarly, Putri et al. (2024) found that the principles of *tabayyun* in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6 remain highly relevant for responding to the spread of hoaxes in today's digital era. Furthermore, Sinaga and Azhar (2025) demonstrated that media literacy strengthens students' ability to verify information on social media before sharing it. These studies indicate that both *tabayyun* and digital literacy emphasize verification, critical thinking, and responsible information sharing. However, they mainly discuss the concept of *tabayyun* from a normative perspective and have not specifically analyzed its implementation in responding to disaster-related information circulating on TikTok.

Other studies have also explored misinformation and digital communication on social media. Faradila et al. (2025) highlighted that digital literacy is essential in helping users evaluate information credibility and reduce the spread of

misinformation in online environments. Nevertheless, previous studies have generally focused on social media in a broad context or on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Research examining information related to the 2025 Sumatra flood on TikTok, particularly by linking the stages of tabayyun with the characteristics of the circulating content and relating them to digital literacy, remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing the urgency of tabayyun toward information related to the 2025 Sumatra flood on TikTok while demonstrating the relevance of tabayyun as an ethical framework that supports digital literacy in responding to misinformation on social media.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a *content analysis method* to examine the phenomenon of the spread of Sumatra flood news in 2025 on the TikTok platform and the urgency of applying the tabayyun principle from the perspective of Q.S. Al-Hujurat paragraph 6. Fadli (2021) explained that qualitative research is research whose findings are not obtained through statistical procedures or numerical calculations, but rather aims to reveal phenomena holistically and contextually through data collection in a natural setting with the researcher as the main instrument. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the meaning, context, and characteristics of information circulating on social media in depth. Through this approach, researchers can interpret the forms of hoaxes, information dissemination patterns, and the relevance of tabayyun values in responding to these phenomena. Qualitative research focuses on complex and dynamic social realities and places researchers as the main instrument in the process of data collection and analysis. This approach is considered relevant to examine the behavior of social media users in responding to information circulating in the digital space (Mutmainah & Hilmiyati, 2025).

The object of this research is TikTok content from November to December that discusses the Sumatra flood event at the end of 2025. This study does not aim to generalize all TikTok content regarding the 2025 Sumatra flood, but rather to provide an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of hoaxes that have a high level of

virality. The research data were in the form of several TikTok content that were selected using *the purposive sampling technique*, which is the selection of samples based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research objectives. These criteria include: (1) content discussing the 2025 Sumatra flood; (2) having a high level of interaction; (3) containing elements of provocative narrative, videos indicated by *Artificial Intelligence* (AI), and (4) being publicly accessible to researchers.

Data collection techniques were carried out through online observation, documentation, and literature studies. Observation was carried out by observing videos, captions, and user interactions on TikTok content related to the 2025 Sumatra floods. Documentation was done by collecting screenshots, the number of impressions, comments, likes, and forms of information contained in the content. Literature studies are used to obtain theoretical foundations regarding tabayyun, hoaxes, digital literacy, disaster communication, and TikTok social media characteristics from various scientific journals and relevant academic sources. This data collection technique is commonly used in qualitative research because it is able to produce rich, in-depth, and contextual data (Siregar & Murhayati, 2024).

Data analysis uses content analysis techniques, which are methods used to identify, classify, and interpret the meaning contained in a message or communication medium. The analysis process is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data categorization, data presentation, interpretation, and concluding. The data that has been collected is classified into several categories of findings, such as provocative narratives, AI-indicated videos, information without clear sources, and information from credible sources. Furthermore, the findings are analyzed by connecting them to the concept of tabayyun in Q.S. Al-Hujurat verse 6. To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses a source triangulation technique by comparing information found in TikTok content with information from credible mass media, official agency reports, and relevant scientific references. Triangulation is one of the techniques commonly used in qualitative research to increase the validity and confidence of research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TikTok as a Media for Spreading Information

The development of digital technology has made social media one of the main means of disseminating information to the public. One of the platforms that has experienced rapid growth is TikTok, which was originally known as a short video-based entertainment medium, but has now developed into an information medium used by various groups. TikTok allows users to quickly access and disseminate information through a combination of video, audio, text, and other interactive features. These characteristics make TikTok not only function as a means of entertainment, but also as a medium for effective information delivery in digital society. Research by (Bur et al., 2023) shows that TikTok has been used as a new information medium that is able to meet the information needs of users, especially the younger generation.

TikTok as a medium for disseminating information has the advantage of an algorithm that is able to distribute content to users based on their interests and interactions through the *For You Page* (FYP) feature. The FYP algorithm is an important factor that affects the dissemination of information on TikTok. The system works by recommending content based on the user's level of interaction, such as the number of impressions, comments, likes, and reshares. As a result, content that is able to grab the user's attention in a short period of time has a greater chance of appearing on other users' homepages. In the context of the 2025 Sumatra floods, content that contains sensational, provocative, or dramatic visual elements gets high interaction so it is easier to go viral. This shows that TikTok's algorithm is oriented towards user engagement (engagement), not on the process of verifying information. Therefore, hoaxes can spread faster than official information because they are often packaged more attractively and are able to provoke an emotional response from the public.

In flood conditions, TikTok has an important role as a communication medium that is able to disseminate information quickly to the public. Information about the condition of the affected areas, the evacuation process, the need for assistance, and the development of the situation on the ground can be conveyed in real-time through video uploads. Research by R. A. Sari et al., (2026) on the

effectiveness of TikTok as a medium for disseminating flood information shows that this platform is able to increase public awareness, encourage social participation, and accelerate the dissemination of disaster information to a wider audience using the *For You Page* feature (FYP). This feature allows a video to reach a large number of users without having to rely on a large number of account followers. This can be seen from the high number of impressions, likes, comments, and the amount of content shared by other users. This characteristic shows that TikTok has the ability to disseminate information very quickly and widely compared to other social media. This condition makes TikTok a platform that is in great demand by the public because the content algorithm that appears in the fyp is in accordance with the user's interests and viewing habits.

However, the speed of information dissemination on TikTok also has consequences in the form of an increased risk of spreading hoaxes and misinformation. Content that is visually and emotionally appealing tends to get high engagement so it is easier to go viral, regardless of the level of truth of the information. In a disaster situation such as the 2025 Sumatra flood, this condition can cause unverified information to spread widely and affect public perception. However, the high level of user interaction with a piece of content does not necessarily indicate that the information conveyed is accurate. Therefore, the use of TikTok as an information medium needs to be balanced with digital literacy skills and tabayyun attitudes so that users do not easily trust or spread information that is not clear about the truth. Thus, TikTok can be optimally used as a means of communication and dissemination of information that is beneficial to the community.

Disaster Hoax and the Spread of Flood Information on TikTok

Hoaxes are information that is not in accordance with the facts and is spread to influence public perception of a certain issue. Rahadi (2017) explained that hoaxes are generally spread without an adequate verification process and aim to shape public opinion or attitudes. Hoaxes in KBBI are interpreted as false information or unsourced news. Fake news or hoaxes that are deliberately created to mislead, influence public opinion, or make readers believe something that is not actually true. Hoaxes

are usually spread through social media, messaging applications, and digital platforms with provocative titles and content that has not been verified for truth. In the context of digital communication, hoaxes often arise because of the ease with which people share information without first checking the facts (Ahmad & Hotimah, 2018).

In Islam, spreading hoaxes or lies is strictly forbidden. Allah commands people to tell the truth or be honest, as the expression of a hadith (*qulil haqq even kana murran*) says, that is, tell the truth even if it is bitter. Allah hates those who tell lies; this is in line with the words of Allah in Surah An-Nur verse 15, which is

إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِ عِلْمٌ
وَتَحْسِبُونَهُ هَيِّئًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ

Meaning: Remember when you receive the false news from mouth to mouth, you say with your mouth what you do not know at all, and you take it for granted, even though in Allah's sight it is a big deal.

The above verse contains a stern warning against the behavior of disseminating information without a clear basis of knowledge. Aisyah & Nasution (2024) explained that this verse emphasizes the importance of the accuracy of information (tabayyun) in communication, especially on social media. This verse is also a prohibition on spreading unverified news because it can cause social damage and division in society. Thus, QS. An-Nur verse 15 teaches that every individual must be careful in receiving and disseminating information and verifying in advance to avoid the spread of hoaxes and slander (Istiqomah et al., 2025).

Hoaxes during disasters usually have the characteristics of using sensational titles or narratives to attract users' attention. This kind of content usually uses sentences that provoke emotions, such as fear, anger, or panic. Disasters make people sensitive to news spread in the media so it affects them emotionally and wants to share it immediately. The information is often disseminated without a clear source and uses sensational headlines or images to quickly attract the public's attention. In disaster situations, people tend to trust easily because they need quick information about safety conditions, evacuation locations, or further threats. Disaster hoaxes also often use old photos or videos

that do not match the actual events to reinforce false narratives. This condition shows that the emergency situation is an opportunity for the spread of disinformation on social media (Sarjito, 2021).

In the case of the Sumatra flood at the end of 2025, TikTok is one of the sources of information for the community. The various content circulating comes not only from official institutions, but also from individual users documenting conditions on the ground. However, not all of this information can be ascertained to be true. Some of the most common forms of hoaxes include the use of videos made using AI, the spread of exaggerated information, and divisive narratives that are not accompanied by clear sources. This condition shows that the speed of information dissemination is not always accompanied by accuracy, so it has the potential to cause disinformation in the community. The following is content that is indicated by hoaxes regarding the 2025 Sumatra flood on TikTok.

Table 1. TikTok Content Analyzed

No	Username TikTok	Date Unggahan	Number of Impressions	Contents
1.	hey.piaaa	28-11-2025	3.6 million	The narrative that Jakarta was flooded as knees immediately entered the news, while the floods in Sumatra were not crowded with news
2.	Rafa	09-12-2025	2.3 million	The narration said that the flood occurred because of Aceh's arrogance
3	Rubian Ariviani	28-11-2025	34,7K	Sumatra's flash flood occurred due to politics

The TikTok content creates a provocative narrative on the floods in Sumatra at the end of 2025. Such content was found to be one of the most dominant forms of information; it uses provocative narratives aimed at attracting users' attention and increasing content interaction. One of the narratives found in the TikTok content *hey. piaaa* that was analyzed was *"Jakarta flooded knee-deep just immediately in the news, it was the turn of the flood in Sumatra not to make the news, as if Indonesia was only Java"*. The content had a total of 3.6 million impressions, 304.6 thousand likes, 8,513 comments, and 7,945 shares when researched. On TikTok content, *Rafa* said, *"because of Aceh's arrogance until it was brought in by floods"*. The content had a total of 2.3 million impressions, 44.1 thousand likes, 3,593 comments, and 5,683 shares when researched. In content, *Rubian Arviani* has 34.7 thousand impressions, 2,796 likes, 199 comments, and 221 shares when researched. Based on the results of the analysis, the narrative is one of the dominant forms of hoaxes found in TikTok content related to the 2025 Sumatra floods. This kind of narrative generally does not focus on conveying disaster information, but rather builds emotional sentiments that can influence public perception. The *hey.piaaa* account, for example, uploads content with the narrative that flood news in Sumatra does not receive the same attention as floods in Jakarta. Meanwhile, according to Mustika (2025), quoted from Kompas.id, news related to the Sumatra disaster penetrated 16,233 local media reports. The content received 3.6 million impressions, 304.6 thousand likes, 8,513 comments, and 7,945 shares. The high number of interactions shows that issues related to inequality of media attention are able to provoke users' emotional responses in the form of feelings of injustice, disappointment, and anger. These emotions encourage users to participate through comments and re-share content, thus expanding the reach of information dissemination. A similar thing was also found on *Rafa's* account, which stated that *"Because of Aceh's arrogance, there will be another flood"*. The content received 2.3 million impressions, 44.1 thousand likes, 3,593 comments, and 5,683 shares. This narrative is not directly related to disaster information, but raises sensitive issues of identity and politics so it has the potential to cause debate in the digital space. The high level of interaction shows that content that touches on the identity of the group

has a greater chance of becoming viral because it is able to elicit emotional reactions from various parties. The narrative then develops so that it has the potential to reinforce negative stereotypes and trigger social conflicts in the midst of disaster situations. In addition, *Rubian Arviani's* account presents a narrative that links the flood to certain political policies and corners one side without including credible sources of information. This kind of content has the potential to shift people's focus from the aspect of disaster management to political debates that are not based on verified data. In crisis situations, the dissemination of information that blames certain parties without clear evidence can worsen the social conditions of the community and hinder collaborative efforts in disaster management. Here's an example of related content.

The study also found content that was indicated to utilize *Artificial Intelligence* (AI)-based visuals to dramatically depict flood conditions, which had no credible sources. The following is AI-indicated content spread on TikTok.

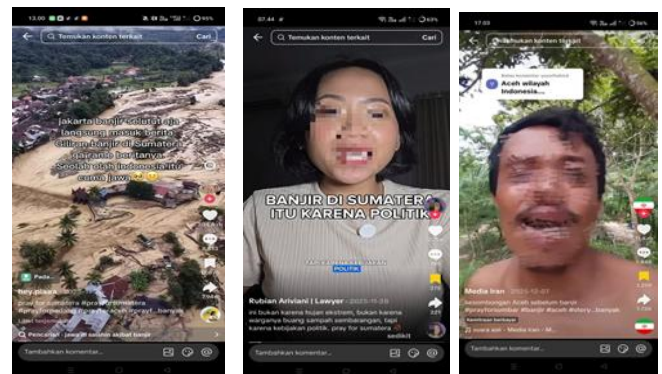


Table 2. TikTok Content Analyzed

No	TikTok Account Name	Upload Date	Number of Impressions	Indicated content
1	Astagfirullah	13-12-2025	13.1 million	Video of husband and wife hugging in the middle of a flood with a narrative of losing property
2	SUNNAH FIGHTERS	09-12-2025	1.3 million	Video of a mother and child stuck in a tree and helped by a member of the SAR team
3	Cider	08-12-2025	826,4K	Video of thousands of snakes dragged by flash floods

Astagfirullah's TikTok account displays a video of the flood entering the house, with a height up to the armpits of an adult. The video shows a husband and wife who wear a lot of gold. They talk about their property, which was completely submerged due to flooding. The video has 13.1 million views, 145.8 thousand likes, 6,122 comments, and 10.6 thousand shares when researched. The second account of PEJUANG SUNAH displays content that shows the evacuation process of flood victims. A rescue worker wearing orange clothes and helmets is helping a mother who is holding a baby in flood conditions. The water appeared to inundate the surrounding area to a considerable height, while officers tried to evacuate them to a safer place using rescue boats. In the video, there is a text saying that a mother and child were trapped in the flood and the rescue team immediately provided help. The video has 1.3 million views, 11.7 thousand likes, 727 comments, and 855 shares when researched. The cidro account shows a visual of thousands of snakes being dragged by flood currents, which gets 826.4 thousand views and turns off the comment column feature.

Based on the content indicated using AI above, it shows a very high level of virality. *Astagfirullah's* TikTok account received 13.1 million views, 145.8 thousand likes, 6,122 comments, and 10.6 thousand shares. The high level of interaction shows that content that displays emotional elements, such as loss of property due to floods, has a strong appeal to TikTok users. Visuals that show a married couple in a flood situation accompanied by a narrative of losing property can evoke a sense of sympathy and empathy so as to encourage users to respond and share the content with other users. However, no information was found explaining that the visual was the result of AI engineering, so it had the potential to cause misunderstandings and was considered a real documentation of the flood event. The same thing was also found on the *PEJUANG SUNAH* account, which received 1.3 million impressions, 11.7 thousand likes, 727 comments, and 855 shares. This content shows the evacuation process of a mother and child who are claimed to be trapped in floods. Visually, the video is designed to resemble field documentation so that it can increase user confidence in the information conveyed. The high number of impressions shows that the public has a great interest in disaster content that shows the

process of rescuing victims. However, as in the previous content, no explanation was found regarding the source or visual authenticity used, so further verification processes were needed before the information could be accepted as fact. In addition, *Cidro's* account displayed visuals of thousands of snakes dragged by flood currents and obtained 826.4 thousand views. Although the comment column is disabled so that user interaction cannot be observed thoroughly, the high number of impressions suggests that content with sensational and fear-inducing elements still has great potential to attract the public's attention. The content of thousands of snakes that are indicated to use AI has the potential to cause psychological anxiety in the form of excessive fear and worry, confusion in distinguishing valid and invalid information, and social conflicts due to the development of perceptions and narratives that are not based on facts. In disaster situations, these conditions can hinder the dissemination of accurate information and reduce the effectiveness of disaster communication. These findings show that the virality of flooded content on TikTok is more influenced by the content's ability to evoke users' emotional responses than the accuracy of the information conveyed. Here is an example of content that is indicated to use AI.

Content that contains elements of sympathy, fear, and visual dramatization tends to gain a wider reach through the *For You Page* (FYP) algorithm; the high level of user interaction causes TikTok's algorithm to consider the content relevant so that it is distributed to more users. This is explained through the concept of *Viral Communication*, which states that content that triggers emotions such as anger, fear, sympathy, and a sense of injustice has a greater chance of being shared than content that is purely informative. Advances in AI technology allow for the creation of visuals that look realistic and resemble real documentation, making them difficult to distinguish by ordinary users. When the video is accompanied by a narrative that touches on emotions, the level of public trust in the content becomes even higher. This condition shows that the development of digital technology not only presents convenience in the production of information, but also creates new challenges in the form of increased potential for visual manipulation that can trigger disinformation if it is not accompanied by an

adequate verification process. From the perspective of tabayyun, this condition shows the importance of verifying the source of information, visual authenticity, and the context of the information before trusting or spreading it to others. Thus, the tabayyun principle is becoming increasingly relevant as a form of digital literacy to deal with the development of AI technology that allows the creation of visual content that looks realistic but does not necessarily correspond to the facts.

We must anticipate the rise of hoax news, especially in the 2025 Sumatra flood news, by preventing the spread of hoax news and recognizing the characteristics of hoax news. Recognizing hoax news can be done by examining the source of information, reading the content of the news in its entirety, and comparing it with other sources that are more credible. Information that comes from official institutions, trusted mass media, or related agencies generally has a higher level of accuracy than information that circulates without a clear source. Visuals indicated as using AI can be identified by paying attention to the visual characteristics that are commonly found in the content produced by AI generation, namely, the consistency of human anatomy, the suitability of object movements, environmental details, body proportions, object texture, and the logical relationship between visual elements. In addition, it compares the analyzed visuals with disaster documentation from official sources and credible media. Users also need to be wary of sensational titles (*clickbait*), information that provokes excessive emotions, and photos or videos that are not accompanied by a clear description of the time and location. The ability to cross-check information is an important form of digital literacy to prevent the spread of hoaxes on social media. Research shows that digital literacy and critical thinking skills have an important role in helping people recognize and filter out incorrect information before sharing it with others (Sari & Purwanti, 2024; Syurfa et al., 2026).

Social media users also need to control their emotional responses when receiving information. News that causes fear, panic, or anger tends to be more trustworthy and spread without an adequate verification process. Therefore, an attitude of not being in a hurry to receive information and the habit of fact-checking are important steps in avoiding hoaxes. From an Islamic perspective, these efforts are

in line with the concept of tabayyun which teaches the importance of researching and ascertaining the truth of news before believing or spreading it. By applying the principles of tabayyun and digital literacy at the same time, people can be wiser in responding to information circulating on social media, especially on disaster issues that have the potential to cause public panic (Bahri, 2021; Putra et al., 2024).

Tabayyun as a Principle of Information Verification in Islam

Tabayyun is a concept in Islam that refers to being careful and clarifying information before believing or spreading it to others. In the language, *tabayyun* means visible or light, while in terms tabayyun means a careful attitude in capturing information by analyzing and finding out the facts and truth first so as not to fall into hoax news (Tohri, 2023). According to M. Quraish Shihab in the journal (Iqbal et al., 2025), *tabayyun* means not to rush to receive news without a clear examination. One must look at the source of the news, the content of the information, and the impact it has had before acting. This explanation shows that *tabayyun* is not only looking for facts, but also maintaining social harmony so that there is no slander, hostility, and misunderstanding in society. Allah says in the Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 6 namely

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ
فَتُصِيبُوهَا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

Meaning: O you who have believed, if a wicked person comes to you with news, then check carefully so that you do not inflict a calamity on a people without knowing its circumstances that cause you to regret your deeds (QS. Al-Hujurat: 6).

Buya Hamka in the journal Saidah (2023) explained that QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6 comes down with regard to the misinformation conveyed by Al-Walid bin Uqbah to the Prophet regarding the Banu Musthaliq. Al-Walid bin Uqbah did not succeed in collecting zakat from the Banu Musthaliq; then he lied by saying that the Banu Musthaliq had apostatised from Islam, which was conveyed to the Messenger of Allah. However, the Prophet did not immediately accept the news, but sent Khalid bin al-Walid to come to the land where the Banu Musthaliq lived. After further investigation, it turned out that the news brought by al-Walid bin Uqbah bin Abu

Mu'ith was not true. The incident shows that unverified information can lead to misunderstandings and social conflicts. Therefore, Allah commands Muslims to perform *tabayyun*, which is to research and verify every piece of information before believing or taking action based on that information. According to Hamka, the principle of *tabayyun* is a very important ethical guideline in community life, especially in the digital era when information can spread quickly through social media such as TikTok. Buya Hamka, in the journal Saidah (2023), explained that the implementation of *tabayyun* can be carried out through the following stages:

1. Researching news sources
2. Checking and ensuring the correctness of information
3. Considering the consequences of such information
4. Not in a hurry to spread the word
5. Making decisions after the facts are clear

Based on these stages, the phenomenon of disseminating information related to the 2025 Sumatra flood on TikTok shows the importance of implementing the *tabayyun* stage in receiving and disseminating information. The first stage is to research the source of the news. In this study, it was found that some content did not include clear sources of information, such as the accounts hey.piaaa, Rafa, and Rubian Ariviani who conveyed narratives about the Sumatra floods without referring to official data from disaster agencies or credible media. This condition shows that the information is conveyed without clarity of the origin of the source, so it has not fulfilled the principle of *tabayyun* in the first stage.

The second stage is to check and ensure the correctness of the information. In this study, several contents were found that indicated the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based visuals, such as the accounts of Astagfirullah, PEJUANG SUNAH, and Cidro. The content is presented to resemble real documentation of flood disasters, but is not accompanied by an explanation of the visual authenticity or the source of its creation. From Tabayyun's perspective, this kind of information requires further verification before it can be accepted as fact because it has the potential to cause misunderstandings in the community.

The third stage is to consider the consequences of the information disseminated. The narrative uploaded by the hey.piaaa account regarding the inequality of news coverage between Jakarta and Sumatra, Rafa's narrative that links the flood to the arrogance of the Acehnese people, and the narrative of Rubian Ariviani who connects the flood with certain political interests have the potential to give rise to negative sentiments, social conflicts, and divisions in the community. In Buya Hamka's view, every piece of information must be considered for its impact so as not to cause harm to other parties.

The fourth stage is not to rush to spread the news. The high number of impressions, comments, and reshares on the analyzed content shows that information can spread very quickly through TikTok's algorithm. However, rapid deployment is not always followed by an adequate verification process. This shows that the principle of prudence as explained by Buya Hamka has not been fully applied in the digital communication ecosystem.

The fifth stage is to decide after the facts are clearly proven. In some content, it was found that there was a tendency to infer the cause of flooding based on unverified opinions, group sentiments, or visuals. In Tabayyun's perspective, an assessment of an event should be made after the facts have been obtained from credible sources and have gone through an adequate verification process. Therefore, the findings of this study show that most of the content analyzed has not fully met the stages of *tabayyun* according to Buya Hamka.

Tabayyun is present in Islam as a solution to respond to hoax news; *tabayyun* can also be in the form of digital literacy. Digital literacy includes not only the ability to use technology, but also the ability to think critically, evaluate information sources, and verify (*tabayyun*) the information received (Lathifah et al., 2026). *Tabayyun* in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6 is relevant to be applied today, because the attitude of *tabayyun* can be done by examining news sources, comparing information from several reliable media, and not directly sharing information that is not clear about the truth. By implementing *tabayyun*, people can avoid slander, provocation, and social division due to fake news (Mahmud et al., n.d.).

The phenomenon of spreading hoaxes on the 2025 Sumatra flood news shows a strong relevance to the message contained in the QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6. This verse instructs Muslims to do *tabayyun* or

verification of every information received so as not to cause errors in making decisions or actions. In the context of social media, information coming from anonymous accounts, content that does not include a clear source, or AI-based videos that have not been verified can be analogized as information that requires a *tabayyun* process before it is accepted as truth. The principle of *tabayyun* requires not only an examination of the source of information, but also of the content, context, and impact that may be caused by the information. Thus, QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6 can be understood as the foundation of digital communication ethics that teaches critical attitudes, prudence, and responsibility in receiving and disseminating information. The application of this principle is becoming increasingly important in the midst of a social media ecosystem that allows information to spread quickly without going through an adequate verification process.

Thus, *tabayyun* in Buya Hamka's perspective is not only understood as a religious moral teaching, but also as a relevant digital literacy framework in facing contemporary communication challenges. The findings of the study show that the spread of the 2025 Sumatra flood hoax on TikTok generally occurs because users do not check the source, content, or impact of the information received. Therefore, the application of *tabayyun* proposed by Buya Hamka can be an ethical guideline for social media users to build a communication culture that is more critical, responsible, and oriented towards the truth of information. This research expands the study of *tabayyun* which has been widely discussed in the general context of social media by applying it to the phenomenon of disaster hoaxes on TikTok. The findings of the study show that the stages of Buya Hamka's *tabayyun* can be used as an analytical framework to identify weaknesses in information verification in digital content. Thus, the concept of *tabayyun* is not only relevant as a religious normative teaching, but also has practical value as a model of digital literacy in facing the challenges of disinformation in the era of *artificial intelligence AI*.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that TikTok is one of the media used by the public to obtain and disseminate information about the 2025 Sumatra floods. The results of the study found that there was content that

did not include a clear source of information as well as visual content that was indicated using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology without an explanation of the visual authenticity. This condition shows that information circulating on social media needs to be verified first before it is trusted or disseminated. The results of the study also show that some of the content analyzed has not met the principles of *tabayyun*, such as examining the source of information, ensuring the correctness of information, considering the impact of information, not rushing to disseminate information, and making decisions after the facts are ascertained. Therefore, *tabayyun* remains relevant to be applied as a guideline in responding to information on social media, especially in disaster situations that require fast and accurate information. In addition, this study shows that *tabayyun* is related to digital literacy because it both emphasizes the importance of examining information sources, verifying, thinking critically, and considering the impact of information before trusting or disseminating it. Thus, the application of *tabayyun* and digital literacy is expected to help the community be wiser in receiving and disseminating information so as to reduce the spread of disinformation on social media.

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