



EMOTION AS THE TOXIC FOR LOGIC

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If your emotion needs logic to grow, emotion will die. If your logic needs support of emotion to develop, your logic will fail. The emotion has a definite pace, but not precise position, however logic has a precise point to grow, so it does not have definite pace. Science says pace and position are not simultaneously definite. – Ajay Upadhyay-

A. Introduction

What comes in your mind when you see this picture? Most people, I bet, will say that those queuing did not respect the medical staffs' sacrifice to save the Covid-19 patients. Others may simply curse at them by referring them as covidiot (the combination of Covid and idiot), a stupid person who still goes outside without proper health procedures despite the pandemic that is happening. However, suddenly the fact turned upside down. There was a news article reporting that the same spot had been taken two different pictures from different angles. Since that news was published, people seem to realize how easy they are manipulated when their emotion is triggered.

The recent policy about praying *tarawih* (prayer conducted during *Ramadhan*) at home instead of going to mosque has brought some commotion.



As reported by one of online newspapers, some Gorontalo residents blocked Trans-Sulawesi road as a form of protest. They protested the rules that Muslims were not allowed to hold *tarawih* prayer at the mosque due to the COVID-19 outbreak. They found this rule was not fair since other mosques still held the prayer together.

Another similar case happened in BauBau, Sulawesi Tenggara. Some people who usually pray at Agung Mosque raised a protest since the mosque was closed for prayer. They made a statement that a mosque was built to accommodate people to pray and call people to pray together.

In fact, the regulation was made in order to minimize COVID-19 spreading. Those who can understand that the rule is not meant to degrade the existence of mosques as the place to pray; instead, it is a suggestion that people pray at their own houses without neglecting the essence and the purpose of *tarawih* prayer. As what happened in BauBau, the mayor gave a statement that Muslims were suggested to pray at their own house to minimize the spread of Covid-19 and this regulation was issued by the Ministry of Religion itself. The mayor also added that he instructed local police and soldiers to give the understanding to the residents.

From those two cases, this article would like to discuss how in this difficult situation our mind and logic will easily get swayed by our emotion. The term post-truth and logical fallacy are the most appropriate notion to explain these cases. This article also would like to explain how to balance our emotion and logic.

B. Discussion

Post truth

It has been around five years since the term that we entered the post-truth era became popular. In

2016, post-truth got the title word of the year from Oxford Dictionary. Hyvönen (2018) mentioned that post-truth is closely related to making a statement that is made to make something look good. This definition is formed seeing the political field in which the politician tends to give good statements despite the bad fact that is hidden behind that statement. Due to this, people look for the fact that is the reality rather than just believing the statement.

In another field and situation, post-truth has a slightly different definition. Haryatmoko (2017) defined post-truth as the time span when people tend to neglect fact and truth. He added hoax is the direct descendent of post-truth. Hoax, as most people have already known, is the fake news.

How can we be sure that we indeed have entered the post-truth era? There are five signs we have entered the post-truth era stated by Haryatmoko (2017). The first sign is the wide information access due to digitalised communication. The second sign is citizens can make their own information and post it in their own social media account because of media democratization and citizen journalism. The next sign is citizens are more fragile in receiving and accepting wrong information because there are many groups which have the same ideology. The fourth sign is technology blurred the truth; it is because being viral is more important than being true. The last sign is truth is not something to be clarified or questioned anymore; people more likely put trust on something viral. In addition, Haryatmoko mentioned that these five signs of the post-truth era gives politicians or other groups of

people a chance to manipulate their opponent by shaking their emotion.

From those two definitions, it can be concluded that post-truth is the time when the fact is blurred by the presented statement to make something look better or worse than it is. Wilber (2017), as cited in Suharyanto (2019), said that post-truth can be connected to nihilism, narcissism, skepticism, and postmodernism. People tend to neglect the universal truth. They believe that reality and truth are just one's perception.

Logical Fallacy

The popularity of the post-truth era reminds us with the notion of logical fallacy. Logical fallacy is defined as reasoning error. There are two types of logical fallacy: a formal fallacy and an informal fallacy. The formal fallacy refers to the error in sequencing the argument. The latter fallacy means the illogical content of the argument. The informal fallacy can be categorized into 15 types; this informal fallacy is now more commonly used to explain type of reasoning error.

Those fifteen types of logical fallacy are: slippery slope, hasty generalization, appeal to ignorance, *tu quoque*/appeal to hypocrisy, ambiguity, circular argument, false dilemma/ false dichotomy/, *ad hominem*, *ad populum*/bandwagon appeal, red herring, straw man, *argumentum ad misericordiam*/ appeal to pity, causal, fallacy of sunk cost, and appeal to authority.

From those fifteen types of logical fallacy, this article will explain two: hasty generalization and bandwagon appeal. The first type has a meaning the opinion is given without enough and reliable evidence and this opinion tends to be biased by personal thought. The latter is a type of logical fallacy in which an opinion is triggered by others' opinion and since many people have the same opinion, then we say that we have the same thought with those.

No matter what types of logical fallacy we commit, the condition remains the same. False reasoning happens when people focus on their own emotion rather than seek for the truth. Hoax must trigger the readers' emotion. Based on the logical fallacy's point of view, emotional reaction toward certain things leads to illogical reasoning. Thus, in order to avoid giving illogical reactions, we should control our emotion in reacting to those news.

Covid-19 Attacks Logic

Talking about these two terms, post truth and logical fallacy, it is clear that this illogical reaction is also related to people's way of thinking. Before talking further about those two terms, let's take a look at Derrida's deconstruction. How are they related? Derrida's deconstruction main idea is thinking beyond the text. Deconstruction raises the question: "What is the limit of the text?" The failure in finding the answer of that question leads us to draw a general conclusion based on our personal opinion.

This way of thinking results in illogical action toward a certain text or phenomenon. That's why the person who cannot receive the message correctly and critically tends to have a logical fallacy. As it has been stated earlier that logical fallacy happens, one of the factors, when the emotion overpowers the logic.

One decision from the authority may be seen as disrespecting one's belief. This opinion seems to come from feeling. Your feelings get hurt knowing that the government limits or even bans certain religions from coming to worshiping places just because the government is afraid of Covid-19. Life matters is in God's hand anyway, we humans cannot control it how and when we die. Yes it is true. However, the number of Covid-19 patients can be controlled by limiting physical meetings. By working, studying, and praying at home, each individual can contribute in minimizing the spread of Covid-19.

From those two news, we can see that emotion tends to overpower logic quite easily. Especially in this situation when people are on the verge of their emotional stability due to "being caged" at home, the news that seems to flout the regulation or rule that tickles their most sensitive aspect of their life can be easily blown up.

The notion of post-truth should be introduced since in this era when news and other information can be found and/or spread in the speed of light needs our logical thinking to question what is presented to us. As what happened when a photographer



Emotions are the curse of logic.

—Frank Herbert—

revealed how the camera angle deceives human's eyes. It has been mentioned earlier that the picture of people queuing and forming a crowd went viral since many people criticized them to be disrespectful to medical staff and those who hold themselves not to go out. In fact, the real situation was taken using different lenses and it was proven that the people queuing while obeying the physical distancing rule.

Balancing Emotion and Logic

It can be said that logical fallacy is not that closely related to post-truth. However, from a writer's point of view, due to someone having a flouting logic, he tends not to question the news he reads or the phenomenon he sees. Upon reading Steunebrink's dissertation, it can be seen that different types of emotion can cause different actions as well. The manifestation of emotion triggered from the outside can take several times to be shown. Even, it can take several years, and

when a person shows the same reaction towards the same emotion again and again, this can be defined as personality traits; it cannot be regarded as an impulsive behavior.

Since emotion can reveal what kind of personality traits someone has, one can choose what kind of characteristics that he wants to have and be seen by others. Steunebrink (2010) mentioned that the consistency in showing emotion determines how a person processes the phenomena happening around him. Based on Steunebrink, there are three phases for certain emotions to be distinguished. The first phase is the perceived situation is appraised by someone based on what he thinks is appropriate to be shown at that moment. The second phase is the appraisal of the situation that can trigger emotions; in this phase, a person is conscious to know that he experiences the emotion. The last phase is emotional feelings that need to be regulated. In this phase, the action chosen to show certain emotion matters in shaping what kind of emotion we want to have or show.

Based on those three phases, it is clear that we can control our emotions. The control here has the meaning that we can consciously choose the action that always makes us feel positive or draw us to the positive state of mind. We can also have control of our desire to show our emotion. Thus, it is important to manage our mind and desire in facing any phenomena or situation in our life. In order to be able to manage our emotions, experience in facing different kinds of situations helps us to shape our emotions. We need to focus on our conscious

mind in making a decision about what kinds of emotion and action we want and need to show as the result of our reaction toward certain situations. By doing so, we can have positive personal traits; as it has been mentioned earlier that the continuous emotional reaction shapes our personal trait.

C. Conclusion

There is a saying: when you follow your heart don't forget to take your brain with you. From this wisdom, it is clear that letting one overpowers the other one is a bad thing to do. It does not mean that following your brain and neglecting your heart is better; instead, the best one is letting these two aspects walk hand in hand in our life. Whatever decision, statement, or action we take in life, make sure we have had a discussion with both heart and mind. Following both heart and mind is also important in this kind of situation; Covid-19 outbreak can break our logic in choosing the appropriate reaction toward certain situations or news.

A regulation or news that seems to trigger our emotion in this suffocating situation tends to take over our logic. The regulation that forbids praying at a worship place is considered as disrespectful action toward the essence of the place to hold a prayer. However, the purpose of the regulation is not to disrespect the existence of mosques or any other worship place; instead, the regulation was issued to control the spread of Covid-19. It is the same as how people get angry when seeing the

picture of some people violating the regulation of physical distancing. Due to the development of the internet, photography experts can clarify how different lenses result in different angles and different pictures which can deceive our eyes.

From the explanation above, it is obvious that we can have certain moments to think about what kind of action is appropriate to react to certain phenomena or situations. It is true that allowing our mind to take over our reaction before emotion is a hard thing to do. We sometimes are trapped in suffocating situations. Covid-19 has pushed

away our need to physically be in touch with other people; ironically, we as social creatures need to maintain our social relationship. Aristotle referred to humans as *zoon politicon* which means we have the basic need to always live and interact with other people. However, no matter what kind of situation we face, we need to remember that we can have some time to allow our conscious mind to decide what kind of reaction is needed in that situation. By doing so, we can reveal that we have a positive personal trait by always showing positive emotion./ WA

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