



The Dilemma of Language Ethics and Freedom of Expression in the Use of Language in Social Media: Analysis of the Hate Speech Case

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Abstract. This research examines the dilemma between language ethics and freedom of expression in relation to hate speech on social media. A mandatory human right, freedom of expression allows people to express their opinions and encourages democratic society. Its misuse on digital platform, however, frequently leads to hate speech that incites animosity, reinforces assumptions, and insults the dignity of the target audience. This research qualitatively analyzes cases of hate speech and freedom of expression in social media spaces through discourse and content analysis. As a result, this research illustrates the dilemma between the expression of hate speech that violates ethical boundaries and the defense of freedom of expression in a democratic society. It also explores principles to maintain the balance between freedom of expression.

Keywords: Language ethics, Hate speech, Freedom of expression

1. INTRODUCTION

Along with the development of the digital era, social media platforms have become a platform for individuals to express opinions, engage in discussions with others, and even shape public perception. With fast and easy accessibility, it is possible for people to share ideas and respond to events in real time widely. This is in line with the increasing access of every individual to free expression through social media.

Freedom of expression is a part of human rights that involves a person's freedom to express opinions, ideas, or feelings without barriers, limitations, or coercion. Quoted from (Nur & Mahzaniar, 2022) freedom of expression specifically through social media is the broad and open sharing of ideas, opinions, and information through digital space. Furthermore, (Susanti, 2022) argued that freedom of expression is the right of every individual to express opinions, ideas, or information freely without interference, as recognized in international human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The nature of freedom of expression is based on several philosophical foundations, namely: 1) Truth-Seeking; 2) Autonomy; and 3) Democracy (Bonotti & Seglow, 2021). 1) (Mill, 2006; McKinnon, 2006, pp. 123-124) in (Bonotti & Seglow, 2021) argued that freedom of speech is essential for discovering the truth through open debate. However, this view is criticized for prioritizing intellectual inquiry over other purposes of free speech, such as emotional expression or cultural practices. 2) Later (Redish, 1982; Baker, 1997) in (Bonotti & Seglow, 2021) argued that Freedom of expression

supports individuals' self-realization and autonomy, allowing them to express their authentic beliefs and consider diverse perspectives. 3) And (Dworkin, 2009; Post, 2011) in (Bonotti & Seglow, 2021) Freedom of speech ensures citizen participation in the democratic process by enabling open discourse and critical evaluation of policies and decisions. In the context of digital media, especially social media, hate speech has the potential to damage individual integrity, spread intolerance, and have a negative impact on society, so it is considered a form of ethical violation.

However, there are still many language ethics issues, especially regarding the rise of hate speech on social media. Social media, as a platform with easy accessibility, increases freedom of expression, while creating a space where language can be used as a weapon, sometimes leading to the spread of hate speech. Hate speech, characterized by insulting, inflammatory, or discriminatory language that targets individuals or groups based on aspects such as race, religion, gender, or ethnicity, raises ethical issues that underscore a key dilemma: balancing between freedom of expression and the need to communicate ethically and respectfully. (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993) in his book acknowledges the importance of freedom of expression, but if freedom of expression affects other people or groups, it can be categorized as hate speech that cannot be protected by freedom of expression. Based on her view, hate speech is a form of expression that can cause fear, hostility, or discrimination against a particular group, rather than mere opinion or criticism. Hate speech violates the basic principles of communication ethics in the following ways: 1) Violates the Principles of Civility and Respect; 2) Eliminates a Sense of Safety and Fairness; 3) Disregard for Human Rights and Dignity. In the term of violating the principles of civility and respect, communication ethics demand the use of polite language and respect for others, whereas hate speech involves insulting or demeaning others. Furthermore, in the term of eliminating a sense of safety and fairness, hate speech creates an unsafe and discriminatory communication environment, contrary to ethics that prioritize fairness and equality. While in the term of disregarding for human rights and dignity, ethics demand respect for the dignity and human rights of individuals, but hate speech undermines and violates that dignity.

This research highlights the dilemma between hate speech as a mismatch of digital communication ethics and users' right to freely express their opinions. On the one hand, freedom of expression is a form of human right that underpins a democratic society and protects the rights of individuals to voice ideas in the public sphere. This freedom of expression can lead to hate speech, which is a matter of language ethics in communication and can contribute to social harm by perpetuating stereotypes, inciting hostility and violating the dignity of

targeted individuals or groups. This dilemma brings into focus the complex language ethics dilemma surrounding digital communication on social media, on how to achieve freedom of expression while maintaining language ethics specifically in the case of hate speech.

This research is based on an analysis of freedom of expression and speech cases posted on social media. By discursively analyzing the language content used in these posts, this research aims to reveal how certain expressions contribute to blurring the line between freedom of expression and issues of language ethics containing hate speech. It will also explore how to achieve freedom of expression by using appropriate language ethics in social media communication.

The findings from this research will not only contribute to understanding the dilemmas and boundaries between freedom of expression and hate speech, but also offer insights into the ethical implications of using language on social media. By examining how language can serve as a tool for expression and also as a source of harm, this research seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse of establishing responsible communication practices on social media. In the end, this research aims to provide information on how to balance the right to freedom of expression and the responsibility to communicate without hate speech.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital communication ethics is currently becoming a widely discussed issue. The rapid development of communication technology encourages variations in communication and the language used in communication. Various studies related to digital communication ethics, especially in social media have been conducted by several researchers. The first study is a study entitled “Digital Communication Ethics and Sharing Messages on Social Media” conducted by (Anshar & Aarsal, 2023). This study highlights ethical principles in sharing information and interacting digitally on social media. The results showed that there are four main principles that must be considered, namely: honesty in message delivery; responsibility for words and actions; politeness towards others; and tolerance of differences. These four principles contribute to the fulfilment of ethics in the context of digital communication on social media.

The second is a study conducted by (Agrawal & Kapoor, 2023), highlights the importance of controlling free speech on social media, highlighting relevant challenges and regulations. The main findings of this study show that social media has opened up a huge space for freedom of expression and information exchange, but its uncontrolled use can bring negative impacts, such as cybercrime, defamation, privacy violations, and social conflicts.

Therefore, a balanced regulation is needed to protect individual rights without sacrificing freedom of expression.

The third is a study titled “Communication ethics in distribution of information through YouTube social media (Case of teacher sexual harassment on Santriwati)” by (Purwatiningsih, 2022) discussed the abandonment of communication ethics in the presentation of information by YouTube content creators. The results showed that many creators used harsh, emotional, and demeaning language in discussing certain cases. The words used are classified as hate speech, because they are considered to trigger public hatred and hostility. This kind of content tends to prioritize sensationalism over informational value, thus violating ethical communication principles and not contributing positively to public understanding.

And the last relevant study conducted by (Herawati, 2016) entitled “The Spread of Hoax and Hate Speech as The Representation of Freedom of Opinions”. This research discusses the spread of hoaxes and hate speech as part of freedom of speech in the digital era. In this study, the development of internet technology is considered to have changed the pattern of communication, so that the internet and social media are considered a free platform to voice opinions. The finding in this study shows that hate speech that is widespread in cyberspace is often considered part of freedom of speech by many internet users or netizens. However, this freedom actually triggers a number of negative impacts, such as increased social tension, the spread of disinformation, and harm to certain individuals or groups.

Based on these four previous studies, this research has significant differences. This research will expand the scope of its analysis by discussing the ethical dilemma between freedom of expression and hate speech, particularly on social media platforms. This dual focus on hate speech and communication ethics within a freedom of expression framework is an aspect that has not been fully explored in previous studies.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research is a descriptive study using a qualitative approach. This qualitative approach is intended to gain a deeper understanding relevant to the background of the study, specifically in examining the ethical dilemmas and freedom of expression in language use on social media. The goal is for the researcher to reveal how certain expressions contribute to or blur the line between freedom of expression and ethical issues of language containing hate speech. It will also explore how to achieve freedom of expression by using appropriate language ethics in communication on social media.

(Moleong, 2007) defines qualitative research as the research aimed at understanding phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as behaviours, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc., in a holistic way, described in words and language within a specific, natural context, using various natural methods. (Sugiyono, 2013) also explains that qualitative research is a method grounded in post-positivist philosophy, applied in natural settings (as opposed to experiments), with the researcher as the key instrument. Data collection techniques use triangulation (a combination of methods), data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research emphasizes meaning over generalization.

The writers chose a qualitative approach because it allows research to be conducted in a natural setting, directly targeting the data sources, thereby providing in-depth information and more valid data that align with the study's background and field conditions. Additionally, qualitative research aims to reveal the true nature of a problem, event, or situation as it exists in the field.

In this study, the focus is on examining the ethical dilemmas and freedom of expression in the use of language on social media, specifically in cases of hate speech. This approach is well-suited to exploring complex communication strategies without relying on quantitative data, allowing for a detailed and nuanced description and a deeper understanding of the study's focus.

4. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Freedom of Expression Case



Data 1. Case study of Bima Yudho Saputro Criticizing the Government in Lampung

Description: A case of criticizing the government in Lampung happened to a TikTok-er named Bima Yudho Saputro. The criticism was in the form of a video post uploaded on his personal tiktok account, and was reported as hate speech instead of criticism which is a form of freedom of expression. The following is an analysis of Bima's speech transcript in his video

post based on CDA theory and how the speech is categorized as freedom of expression, rather than hate speech.

a. Critical Discourse Analysis

(Fairclough, 1989) proposed three dimensions of Critical Discourse Analysis: 1) Textual, which is an analysis that focuses on the linguistic features of the text, such as vocabulary, syntax, and rhetorical devices; 2) Discursive Practice, which is an analysis that focuses on the process of production, distribution, and consumption of texts; and 3) Social Practices, which is an analysis that focuses on the ideologies of society and the wider culture that influence and are reflected in language.

Table 1

Text (Utterance)	CDA Dimensions		
	Textual	Discursive Practice	Social Practices
<p>“Ini Pemerintah main ular tangga atau apa?”</p> <p>And “sekarang udah jadi tempat Jin buang anak kali”</p>	<p>These utterances attract young audiences and build emotional connections with people's collective experiences, so this text constructs the government as an inefficient and corrupt entity, supported by personal experiences and data to strengthen the argument</p>	<p>In the dimension of discourse practice, the use of TikTok as a medium reflects a strategy of fast and wide dissemination of messages, while the speaker's narrative style gives moral authority to his criticism.</p>	<p>From a socio-cultural perspective, this speech expresses the unrest of Lampung people towards their regional governance and the economic structure that depends on the fluctuating agricultural sector.</p>

b. Content Analysis of Freedom of Expression

As (Bonotti & Seglow, 2021) argued, there are three philosophical foundations of freedom of expression: 1) Truth-Seeking; 2) Autonomy; and 3) Democracy

Table 2

No	Text (Utterance)	Three Philosophical Foundation of Freedom of Expression		
		Truth-Seeking	Autonomy	Democracy
1.	<p>Gue Bima. Gua berasal dari provinsi yang satu ini, Dajjal. Alasan pertama adalah infrastruktur yang terbatas. Ini banyak banget di Lampung tuh proyek-proyek dari pemerintah yang mangkrak. Contohnya Kota Baru, dari zaman gua SD sampai sekarang gua nggak pernah dengar kabarnya lagi. Itu aliran dana dari pemerintah pusat itu ratusan miliar ya besti. Dan gua gak tau</p>	<p>A critique of local government governance that exposes weaknesses. For example, revealing stalled projects, poor infrastructure using experiential data. Remarks such as the sarcastic comment about “sekarang udah jadi tempat Jin buang anak”</p>	<p>Bima as a speaker uses personal freedom to articulate his personal experiences and views on governance, supporting self-realization and encouraging deliberation with diverse perspectives from an audience of other tiktok users. TikTok as a social media provides a</p>	<p>Within the framework of Democracy, this speech plays an important role in enabling citizen participation in the democratic process. The phrase “Ini banyak banget di Lampung tuh proyek-proyek dari pemerintah yang mangkrak” invites public evaluation of governance and encourages</p>

	<p>tuh, sekarang udah jadi tempat Jin buang anak kali. Dan juga jalan-jalan di Lampung ya, gua sering bahas jalan, karena jalan itu adalah infrastruktur yang paling umum dan untuk mobilisasi ekonomi di Lampung. Tapi jalan-jalan di Lampung itu kayak 1 km bagus, satu km rusak, terus Jalannya ditempel-tempel doang ini apa sih? Ini Pemerintah main ular tangga atau apa? Sistem pendidikan yang lemah nih alasan kedua. Gue nggak bilang lampung itu kekurangan orang pintar ya. Lampung itu banyak banget orang pintar, menteri-menteri aja banyak dari lampung. Erick Thohir, Sri Mulyani tuh kan. Menteri Pertahanan juga di Lampung. Cuma proses penyaringan peserta didik yang ada di Lampung itu sendiri itu banyak banget kecurangannya. Bahkan yang berkontribusi itu orang-orang yang bekerja di sektor Pendidikan. Kayak dosen nitipin anaknya, Rektor nitipin ponakannya, ini apa sih? Kunci jawaban kesebar, kalau udah mau UN tuh kan itu kalau bukan yang dari itu pemerintah. Nyokap gue? Gue? orang gila.</p>	<p>kali” highlight the failures of Lampung's government to improve roads and infrastructure. Failure in the education system is conveyed through the utterance “Rektor nitipin ponakannya, Kunci jawaban kesebar, kalau udah mau UN”.</p>	<p>space for speakers to reach a wider audience, facilitating a two-way dialog that enriches public discourse.</p>	<p>consideration of infrastructure policy changes.</p>
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Analysis of Hate Speech Case



Data 2. Case Study of hate speech in platform X

“Kasihannya capres yg anaknya fashion designer homo” (“Poor presidential candidate whose son is a gay fashion designer”)

Description: Fufufafa is an X account that has recently been widely discussed for its posts demonizing Prabowo, the presidential candidate. The posts uploaded by this account use unethical language, and threaten someone's dignity so it is categorized as hate speech.



Data 3. Case Study of hate speech in platform X

“Kek babi ngak sih orangnya wkwk” (“Isn’t he like a pig? lol”)

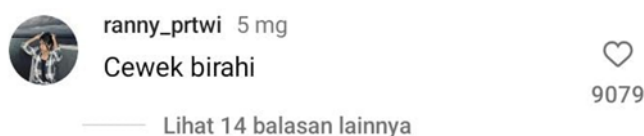
Description: There's one incident in Surabaya, that involves a middle-aged man who, after learning that his child was mocked by another child (compared to a poodle), retaliated by demanding that the child apologize in a highly degrading way. This included forcing the child to bow down, apologize, and even mimic a dog by barking. This situation quickly gained widespread attention, sparking public reactions, discussions on respect and parental overreach, and, as expected, a range of online comments to the videos that chronology.



Data 4. Case Study of Hate speech on platform YouTube

“Party at the mosque”

Description: This is an album post on YouTube by an account. This account stole a lot of attention because it uploaded an album about a religion, but not in accordance with what should be in. The post shows a song cover with the words “Party at the mosque” which does not match the proper function of a mosque, as a place of worship. This post sparked a lot of controversy, especially among Muslims because they felt that their religion was being dishonored and treated inappropriately.



Data 5. Case Study of Hate speech on platform Instagram

“Cewek birahi” (“lustful woman”)

Description: A controversial affair involved an influencer named Azizah Salsha. It was alleged that she had an affair with the boyfriend of another influencer who was her friend, and the fact that she already had a husband. Azizah Salsha posted a video that was completely unrelated to the controversy, but the post invited negative comments from other Instagram users.

a. Critical Discourse Analysis

In accordance with the opinion proposed by (Fairclough, 1989), Critical Discourse Analysis is classified into 3 dimensions as follows:

Table 3.

No.	Text (Utterance)	Three Dimensions of Critical Discourse Analysis		
		Textual	Discursive Practice	Social Practices
1.	Data 2 <i>“Kasihannya capres yg anaknya fashion designer homo”</i>	From a textual perspective, the utterance is a simple statement in the form of a language structure stating that the presidential candidate's son is a fashion designer with a homosexual sexual orientation. Evaluatively, it reflects a negative judgment.	The utterance can be seen as a form of satire or insult to the presidential candidate, by associating his son with negative stereotypes related to sexual orientation. This led to the audience's interpretation of the vice presidential candidate's incompetence to be appointed as the country's deputy leader. It may also encourage discrimination bias from associating a profession (fashion designer) with sexual orientation.	In a political context, the use of this kind of speech aims to denigrate political opponents by exploiting personal issues, where the use of the word <i>“Kasihannya”</i> shows a condescending and judgmental attitude, and reinforces social stigma against certain groups.
2.	Data 3 <i>“Kek babi ngak sih orangnya wkwk”</i>	From a textual perspective, the choice of diction in this expression uses casual and informal language, such as <i>“kek”</i> , <i>“ngak”</i> , and <i>“wkwk”</i> , which indicates a light and humorous tone. However, on the other hand, this expression also contains an element of condescension, by comparing a person to a pig, which can be considered connotatively demeaning.	From a discursive point of view, this utterance shows a function in the context of social media communication, where an informal style is often used, containing humor or satire. However, the use of the word <i>“kek babi”</i> creates a negative construction of the named individual, which can reinforce demeaning stigmas and stereotypes.	In terms of social practice, these utterances reflect how stereotypes and stigmas can be used in everyday communication on social media to assert dominance and demean individuals. Culturally, terms such as <i>“pig”</i> are known as crude remarks that compare a person of much higher dignity to an animal known for being dirty. This is commonly considered an insult that dehumanizes a person.
3.	Data 4 <i>“Party at the mosque”</i>	Textually, this phrase combines two contrasting dictions: <i>“party”</i> , which is usually associated with casual or hedonistic	From a discursive perspective, these expressions often appear in online interactions such as memes or comments, where the context of use is either	In terms of social practice, mosque means a place of worship and a clean and holy place in Islam. Therefore, the

		celebrations, with “mosque”, a Muslim place of worship that is considered sacred.	as humor, satire, or insult. In this context, involving the sacred place of a religion will lead to the audience's interpretation that the expression is made to make fun of a particular religious group, which denigrates religious symbols.	use of this phrase can be considered as an insult to the religious and cultural values of the Muslim community, especially in cultural contexts where mosques are sacred.
4.	Data 5 “ <i>Cewek birahi</i> ”	Textually, this utterance uses informal and casual diction with the word “cewek” to refer to women. Then there is the word “birahi” which refers to sexual urges, which together create a reductive meaning towards female identity by explicitly emphasizing the sexual aspect.	Discursively, these expressions are often used in informal discourse such as social media or daily conversations with the aim of mocking, demeaning, or objectifying women, thus reinforcing negative stereotypes of women as sexual objects.	On the social practice dimension, these expressions reflect patriarchal norms that objectify women, support gender inequality, and normalize the degradation of women, thus impacting the way women are viewed and treated in society.

b. Content Analysis of Hate Speech

As (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993) argued, there are three indication of hate speech violates the basic principles of communication ethics, namely: 1) Violates the Principles of Civility and Respect; 2) Eliminates a Sense of Safety and Fairness; 3) Disregard for Human Rights and Dignity.

Table 4.

No	Text (Utterance)	Three indication of hate speech		
		Violates PCR	Eliminates SF	Disregard HD
1.	Data 2 “ <i>Kasihannya capres yg anaknya fashion designer homo</i> ”	This utterance can violate the principles of politeness and respect, as the language used demeans individuals and associates presidential candidates with negative stereotypes related to their children's sexual orientation.	This can also diminish the sense of safety and fairness for the LGBT+ community, reinforce social injustice, and ignore the principles of communication ethics that prioritize equality.	This utterance can be categorized as hate speech, because it could dehumanize individuals and violates human rights, as insulting or stigmatizing someone based on their personal identity is a form of discrimination that goes against the principle of respect for basic human rights.
2.	Data 3 “ <i>Kek babi ngak sih orangnya wkwk</i> ”	Phrases such as “kek babi ngak sih” violate the principles of politeness and respect, as they contain blurs that directly demean the intended individual, showing a lack of respect.	In addition to that, this utterance also has the potential to create an unsafe communication environment, where people feel marginalized or threatened, even though it may be intended as a joke.	Furthermore, it disregards human rights and dignity, by directing insults directly at individuals, which can reduce self-esteem and worsen the social atmosphere in the digital space.
3.	Data 4 “ <i>Party at the mosque</i> ”	According to the concept of hate speech proposed by Matsuda, this expression has the potential to harm certain individuals or groups through discrimination or humiliation. This phrase violates the principles of politeness and respect because it associates the mosque with an inappropriate context, such as “party”.	This phrase can create insecurity for the Muslim community because it is perceived as a symbolic attack on the place. This can create insecurity for the Muslim community as it is perceived as a symbolic attack on their place of worship.	It also undermines the dignity of individuals or groups associated with the Islamic religion, violating human rights that demand respect for religious identity.

4.	Data 5 " <i>Cewek birahi</i> "	Based on Matsuda's theory, this comment directed at Azizah Salsha clearly violates the principle of civility and respect in communication ethics. Communication should ideally promote respectful and constructive dialogue, yet this comment is derogatory and insulting, directly attacking Azizah's character. Instead of engaging in a thoughtful exchange of ideas or criticism, the commenter resorts to language that demeans and disrespects her. This behavior contradicts the ethical expectation to treat others with dignity and maintain respectful interactions, especially in public spaces like social media.	Furthermore, the comment eliminates a sense of safety and fairness in the communication environment. Hate speech, as Matsuda argues, creates a hostile atmosphere where individuals feel unsafe and unfairly targeted. The comment contributes to a toxic environment for Azizah, making her the subject of public humiliation and harassment. This unfairly shifts the focus from any constructive discussion to personal attacks, discouraging open dialogue and perpetuating an unsafe online space, particularly for women, who are often more vulnerable to such attacks.	This comment disregards Azizah's human rights and dignity by reducing her identity to a sexist and derogatory label. According to Matsuda, ethical communication must respect the inherent dignity of individuals, but this comment objectifies and dehumanizes Azizah. It reinforces harmful gender stereotypes, portraying her in a negative light based solely on baseless assumptions. Such language not only undermines her right to be treated with respect but also perpetuates discrimination and inequality, violating the fundamental principles of ethical and respectful communication.
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The Dilemma Between Hate Speech and Freedom of Expression

The intersection of hate speech and freedom of expression presents a significant ethical and philosophical dilemma, especially in the context of social media. This dilemma arises from the inherent tension between upholding the fundamental right to free speech and the inherent tension between upholding the fundamental right to freedom of expression and freedom of social media.

As discussed by (Bonotti & Seglow, 2021), freedom of expression is rooted in three philosophical principles: truth-seeking, autonomy, and democracy. Establishing freedom of expression as a cornerstone of a democratic society means allowing individuals to share ideas, express emotions, and participate in public discourse. In their implementation, however, these principles are subject to consideration of the ethical consequences of communication, especially when such expression leads to harm, discrimination or hostility.

The case analysis of Bima Yudho Saputro's criticism of the Lampung government amply demonstrates how freedom of expression is delivered with democratic objectives and encourages accountability and enables public evaluation of government. His utterances were critical and emotional, but still viewed as freedom of expression, as they did not cross the boundaries of freedom of expression aimed at discussing systemic issues and inspiring constructive discourse on governance. In line with the truth-seeking principle, the speeches emphasize governance failures and encourage debate in the public sphere.

On the other hand, the analysis of hate speech cases shows violations of the principles of communication ethics. For example, one comment "Pity the presidential candidate whose son is a gay fashion designer" attacks a person personally with derogatory stereotypes,

violating the principles of civility and respect. Such language is not constructive discourse, but personal vilification, which violates basic principles of communication ethics and democratic participation.

As (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993) proposed three indication of hate speech violates the basic principles of communication ethics: 1) Violates the Principles of Civility and Respect; 2) Eliminates a Sense of Safety and Fairness; 3) Disregard for Human Rights and Dignity. These indicators have clearly shown cases of hate speech occurring on social media. For example, the phrase *“Kek babi ngak sih orangnya wkwk”* uses humor to mask a degrading comparison to the target, but reflects a lack of respect and perpetuates a bad stereotype of a person. Similarly, the utterance *“Party at the mosque”* denigrates sacred religious practices, causing feelings of insecurity among the religions involved. These analytical examples illustrate how hate speech can harm an individual while eroding the social order that prohibits discrimination and destroys trust in the digital space.

Balancing Ethical Communication and Freedom of Expression

The causal analysis has highlighted the different boundaries between exercising freedom of expression and engaging in hate speech. While freedom of expression is essential in a democratic society, it must be exercised responsibly to prevent harm. Achieving this balance requires adherence to principles of ethical communication, such as:

- 1) **Civility and Respect:** As seen in Bima's critique, constructive criticism must address systemic issues without personal attacks. By doing so, ethical standards can be achieved, while encouraging fruitful constructive dialog.
- 2) **Accountability:** Both social media platforms and users must ensure accountability by actively identifying and addressing hate speech. Clear community guidelines and proactive moderation can help maintain respectful discourse.
- 3) **Education and Awareness:** Promoting digital literacy and ethical communication can improve individuals' ability to navigate online interactions that reflect responsibility, separating critical expression from hate speech.
- 4) **Legal Intervention and Policy:** As suggested by Agrawal and Kapoor (2023), a balance of regulations is essential to protect the rights of individuals while putting limits on the abuse of freedom of expression. Laws addressing hate speech should be aligned with international human rights standards to ensure protection and accountability.

5. CONCLUSION

The intersection of hate speech and freedom of expression highlights the urgency of a multifaceted approach that simultaneously integrates ethical, legal and educational strategies. Based on the findings from this study, it reveals how responsible use of language can uphold democratic ideals and promote constructive dialogue. Conversely, the abuse of freedom of expression by spreading hate speech can undermine democracy, cause harm and perpetuate inequality. By improving communication ethics, we can protect freedom of expression while reducing the harmful effects of hate speech in the digital space.

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