

## Hate Speech in Cyberspace: Fueling the Rejection of Rohingya Refugees in Indonesia

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### **Abstract:**

*This research aims to trace and analyze how negative sentiments towards Rohingya refugees are disseminated on Social Media Platform X. This phenomenon is increasingly concerning as it involves not only negative sentiments but also the spread of hoaxes that can lead to discrimination and hatred. The study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analysis method, focusing on content analysis of hate narratives emerging on Social Media Platform X. Collected data include comments, posts, and various forms of negative content targeting Rohingya refugees. I argue that hate speech towards Rohingya refugees tends to originate from anonymous fanbase accounts. The negative narratives from these accounts successfully shape public opinion and cultivate a xenophobic attitude among Indonesian netizens on Social Media Platform X. Furthermore, this hate speech contributes to the creation of a double standard between the issues of Palestine and Rohingya on Social Media Platform X, potentially influencing society's perception and attitude towards both issues.*

**Keywords:** *hate speech, rohingya, refugee, xenophobia, Indonesia*

## **INRODUCTION**

The contemporary Rohingya refugee crisis emerges as a pressing global political concern in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Predominantly affecting some of the most economically disadvantaged individuals, this crisis has manifested prominently in both Bangladesh and Myanmar. A staggering figure exceeding ten million individuals belonging to the Rohingya minority find themselves displaced and subject to persecution at the hands of the Myanmar Government, the military, and Buddhist extremist factions. The multifaceted nature of their plight, encompassing persecution, oppression, genocide, displacement, and racial conflict, has compelled various Rohingya organizations to undertake the arduous decision of abandoning their residences, lands, and possessions in the Rakhine and Arakan states of Myanmar. This egregious situation, resonating as an incredulous and intolerable concern on

a global scale, underscores the gravity of the challenges faced by the Rohingya population (Hossain, 2021).

In recent years, there has been a significant influx of Rohingya refugees seeking asylum in Indonesia. According to the latest data from the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), more than 1200 Rohingya refugees have sought refuge in Indonesia, with an additional 300 arriving just last week (Fadhil, 2023).

The mass arrival of Rohingya refugees in the past few weeks has sparked heated discussions across various social media platforms in Indonesia. Eberl et al. highlight that social media plays a pivotal role in influencing public opinion regarding the ongoing Rohingya crisis. Additionally, social media platforms have the potential to shape narratives, whether by supporting the acceptance of Rohingya refugees or, conversely, by constructing narratives that marginalize them (Eberl et al., 2018).

Several studies have delved into the Rohingya refugee crisis, providing valuable insights. For instance, Fatma discusses the role of new media in addressing the Rohingya humanitarian crisis (Elzahraa, 2020). Kironka and Ni-Peng explore how state-run media portray Rohingya as a homogenous group of perpetrators threatening national peace and stability (Kironka & Peng, 2021). Similarly, Nadhirah et al. examine the responses of Malaysian citizens to Rohingya refugees visiting their country during the Covid-19 pandemic (Rashid & Saidin, 2023; Siti Nurnadilla & Jamil, 2023). What sets these studies apart from the aforementioned research is their focus on tracing the sources of hate speech specifically against Rohingya refugees, successfully influencing negative opinions about them on social media, especially on platform X.

Therefore, this article aims to pose two primary questions. Firstly, how is the dissemination of hate speech against Rohingya refugees conducted on platform X? Secondly, to what extent does this hate speech impact shaping the opinions of netizens in Indonesia?

Based on my research findings, I argue that hate speech targeting Rohingya refugees in Indonesia stems from anonymous large fanbase accounts, fostering echo chambers that vehemently oppose their acceptance. This negativity has fueled xenophobia within the Indonesian community, evident in their reactions to proposed asylum and identity card measures for Rohingya refugees. Furthermore, a stark contrast exists in the support garnered for Rohingya and Palestinian victims of genocide, with the former lacking solidarity. Notably, the disconcerting revelation is that the accounts initiating solidarity for Palestine are the same ones perpetuating negativity towards Rohingya refugees, highlighting a disturbing inconsistency in empathy and advocacy within the online space.

Finally, this article delves into the complexities of hate speech against the Rohingya on X platform in Indonesia using a qualitative approach. This method allows for a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon, going beyond the surface level of word counts and frequencies to capture the deeper meanings and intentions behind the language used.

The primary research methods employed in this investigation are online observation and content analysis, as outlined by Adel and Numan (Adel & Numan, 2023). Online observation involves immersing oneself in the online environment where hate speech occurs, allowing the researcher to observe firsthand the interactions, discussions, and the overall context in which the harmful language is used. Content analysis, on the other hand, involves systematically examining and coding the collected online data, such as text posts, comments, and images, to identify recurring themes, patterns, and underlying ideologies that fuel hate speech against the Rohingya.

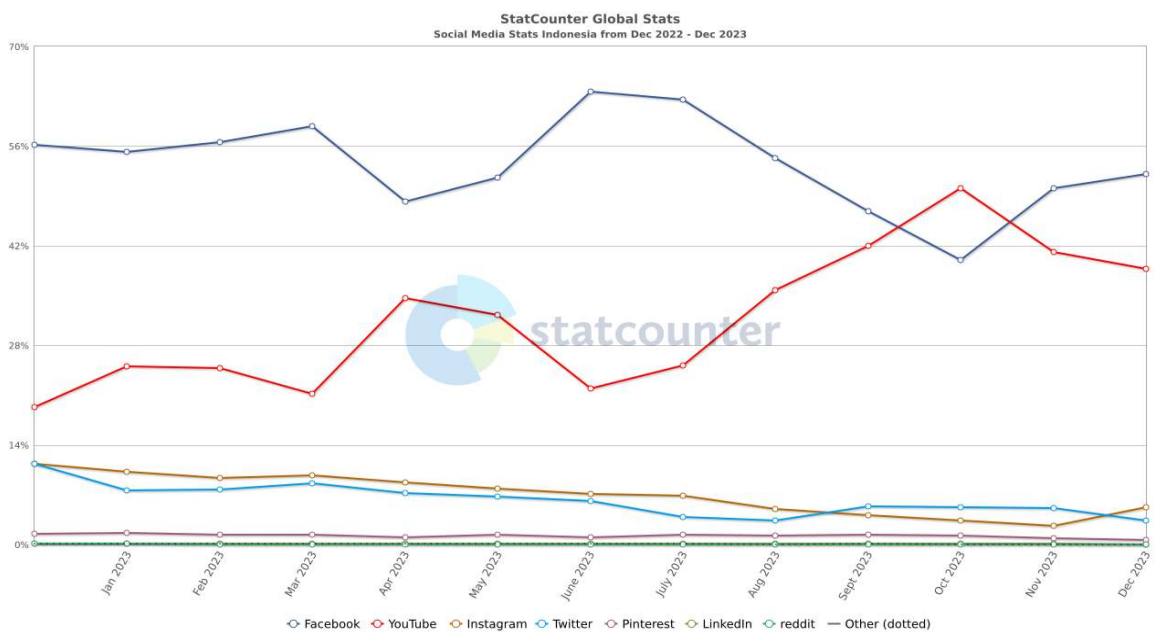
By combining these two methods, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of hate speech, not only how it manifests but also the underlying factors that contribute to its spread and persistence on X platform in Indonesia. This approach can offer valuable insights for policymakers, social media platforms, and civil society organizations in developing effective strategies to counter hate speech and promote online spaces that are inclusive and respectful towards all communities.

## DISCUSSION

### Anonymous Accounts as a Source of Hate Speech on X Platform

Global stats report that X platform, formerly renowned by the name Twitter, holds the third position among the most frequently accessed social media platforms in Indonesia, boasting a notable 3.3% usage share. This indicates a substantial user engagement with the platform, showcasing its enduring popularity and influence within the Indonesian social media landscape.

Figure 1. Social Media Stats Indonesia December 2023



According to Nadhirah and Irwan, the X platform is defined as a social media site where users can share textual content, known as 'Tweets,' with a maximum limit of 280 characters for those whose accounts are yet to be verified and have not subscribed to the coveted blue checkmark (Rashid & Saidin, 2023). Upon attaining the blue checkmark, users on the X platform gain the automatic privilege of extending their tweets beyond the initial 218-character restriction. This distinction is highlighted as one of the advantages of the X platform, as pointed out by Takikawa and Nagayoshi. They emphasize that this social media platform holds the potential to serve as a free public space and is particularly well-suited for fostering public discourse when compared to other social media sites. This attribute underscores the platform's unique position in facilitating meaningful and extensive interactions within public dialogue (Takikawa & Nagayoshi, 2017).

However, it cannot be denied that, given the microblogging nature of the X platform, a seemingly ordinary narrative can be framed into one of hatred (Amm et al., 2016). This narrative of hatred, as highlighted by Cohen-Almagor, is rooted in biased attitudes and is directed towards a group of people based on various differing characteristics encompassing ethnicity, gender, skin colour, nationality, sexual orientation, race, or physical disabilities. Not exempt from this unfortunate reality are the Rohingya refugees who, in recent months, have arrived in Indonesia only to face hate speech attacks on social media (Cohen-Almagor, 2011).

Baider et al. further elaborate on the various forms that hate speech takes in the media, including inflammatory and offensive comments or comments characterized by prejudice and intolerance. These expressions may not necessarily be classified as hate speech in the legal sense, but they undeniably still possess the potential to inflict devastating effects on their recipients. The complex dynamics of hate speech on the X platform underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of its impact and the responsibility of users in curbing the propagation of harmful narratives (Siti Nurnadilla & Jamil, 2023).

On platform X, one can easily encounter instances of hate speech strategically employed to manipulate public sentiment against Rohingya refugees. What is even more alarming is the fact that these prejudiced narratives are disseminated through fan accounts or forums boasting substantial followings. It is noteworthy that on such platforms, individuals can freely send messages to be posted on these accounts without fear of revealing their identities—a phenomenon aptly referred to by Diana Ascher as 'Anonymity Online' (Ascher & Umoja Noble, 2019). As highlighted by Ascher, she writes:

*You can be whoever you want to be. You can completely redefine yourself if you want. You do not have to worry about the slots other people put you in as much. They do not look at your body and make assumptions. They do not hear your accent and make assumptions. All they see are your words.*

As highlighted by Ascher, the perspective above reflects one of the positive outcomes of the phenomenon of online anonymity, where users of social media platforms find a space to pour out their thoughts and foster writing creativity without revealing their true identities. This grants individuals the freedom to express themselves without the constraints of societal judgment. However, on the flip side, the negative repercussions of this phenomenon are far-reaching. The owners of anonymous accounts can exploit their anonymity to disseminate misinformation, propagate hoaxes, and unfairly target individuals or groups they may harbor dislike towards. This dual nature of online anonymity underscores the complex interplay between the positive and negative aspects of unrestricted expression on digital platforms, revealing the potential for both creative self-expression and the misuse of such anonymity to perpetuate harmful narratives (Pohan & Lbs, 2022).

The negative facet of the online anonymity phenomenon specifically targets Rohingya refugees, as indicated by Drone Emprit's findings. It has been documented that approximately 30% of sentiments expressed online regarding Rohingya refugees are negative. This alarming statistic underscores the extent to which online platforms can be utilized to disseminate adverse narratives and opinions, contributing to the proliferation of biased perspectives against this vulnerable group. An illustrative example is the trending

hashtag #Rohingnya, which notably secured the third position on Indonesia's Trending Topics on December 7, 2023 (Fahmi, 2023).

The genesis of the dissemination of negative narratives about innocent Rohingya refugees can be traced back to prominent fanbase accounts. For instance, the account @sosmedkeras played a pivotal role in circulating a narrative that framed a snippet of Prabowo Subianto's comments addressing the Rohingya issue. The post insinuated that Prabowo Subianto asserted that many people in Indonesia are still facing hardships. What makes this situation even more concerning is the strategic addition of a caption by the account, saying 'True sir' (*Betul Pak*), implying an endorsement of the sentiment expressed.

This post successfully steered the negative opinions of netizens regarding the Rohingya, garnering attention with a remarkable 3.3 million views, 963 comments, 2 thousand retweets, and 25 thousand likes. Similarly, the account @kegblgnunfaedh shared a captured photo featuring Rohingya refugees at the Meuseraya Aceh Hall, actively participating in a hunger strike to demand better accommodations. The refugees were advocating for more suitable shelter. The account added a brief caption that simply stated, 'Well' (*Lab*). This post also managed to capture significant attention, accumulating 1.6 million views, 3 thousand comments, 1 thousand reposts, and 11 thousand likes.

These instances underscore the impact that social media posts, particularly from influential accounts, can have on shaping public opinion. By strategically framing and presenting information, these posts effectively influenced the narrative around Rohingya refugees, generating considerable engagement and fostering negative sentiments among netizens. It highlights the need for critical evaluation of online content and the potential consequences it may have on the perceptions of vulnerable communities.

The dissemination of negative opinions by anonymous fanbase accounts with a substantial number of followers indirectly gives rise to echo chambers on the X platform. Cinelli (2021) characterizes echo chambers as environments where users' opinions, political leanings, or beliefs on a particular topic are reinforced through repeated interactions with peers or sources that share similar tendencies and attitudes (Cinelli et al., 2021). Penagos further explains this as a figurative concept wherein views are strengthened through repetitive interactions within a confined structure that discourages opposing perspectives (Rashid & Saidin, 2023).

In line with the group polarization theory, an echo chamber serves as a mechanism to solidify existing opinions within a group, ultimately pushing the entire group toward more extreme positions (Sunstein, 2020). To exacerbate matters, Kohl (2018) posits that the prevalence of the echo chamber effect in numerous online communities, coupled with the anonymity that allows users to conceal their identities, adds a layer of complexity to the challenge of suppressing dissenters and political minorities. The intertwining of these factors compounds the issue, creating an environment where diverse viewpoints struggle to be heard and acknowledged (Kohl, 2018).

Figure 2. The tweets from anti-Rohingya accounts

No	Username	Followers	Tweets
1.	@sosmedkeras	3.8 Million	A photo capture containing comments from Prabowo Subianto responding to the Rohingya issue and stating that many people in Indonesia

			are still facing hardships.
2.	@Heraloebs	98,7 thousand	An example of the behavior of immigrants who have no self-awareness is when suddenly they go berserk because the electricity goes out, and there is a fire next to the shelter.
3.	@AREA JULID	4,8 Million	In our own country, there are still many facing difficulties, yet we are helping others.
4.	@kegblgnunfaedh	9,4 Million	A captured photo featuring Rohingya refugees at the Meuseraya Aceh Hall, actively engaging in a hunger strike, demanding more suitable accommodations.

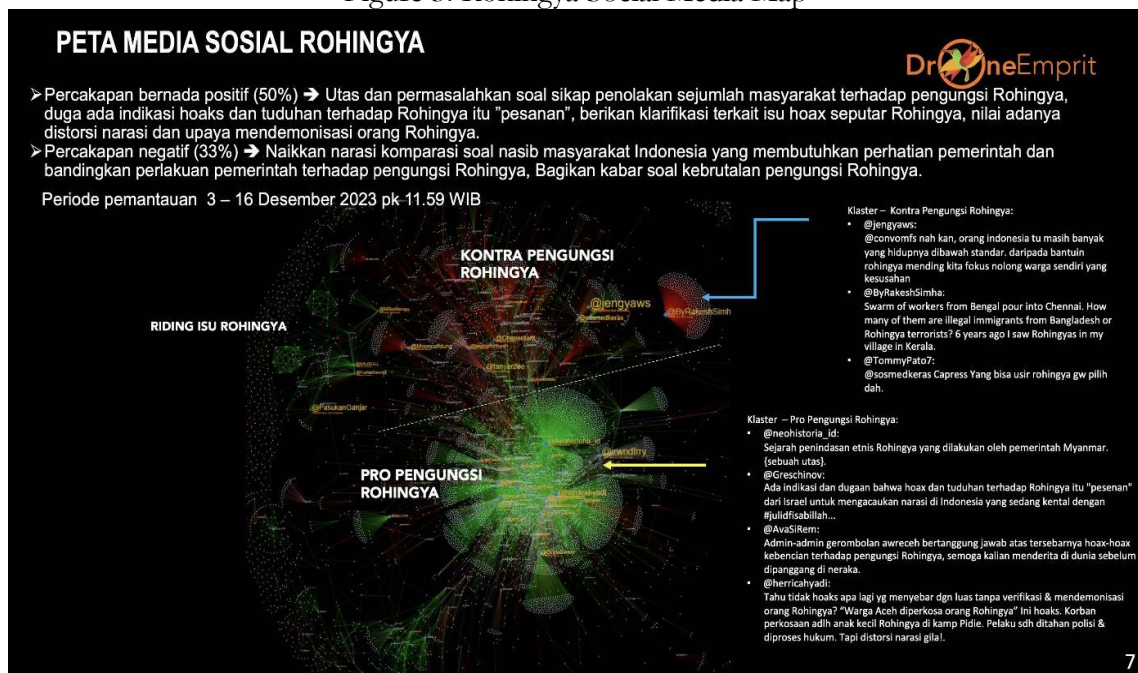
The echo chamber phenomenon observed on platform X regarding Rohingya refugees can have various adverse effects. This is primarily because individuals within these echo chambers are exposed only to negative information about Rohingya refugees, such as news about the violence they allegedly commit or the economic burden they purportedly impose. These pieces of information can reinforce pre-existing negative beliefs and foster increased intolerance towards the Rohingya community.

For instance, the account @kegblgnunfaedh. When this account posted the opinion of UNHCR urging Aceh residents not to reject Rohingya refugees but rather relocate them to other islands, it remarkably succeeded in steering public opinion to align with the preconceived notions of its followers regarding Rohingya refugees. A comment on the post exemplifies this sentiment: "Big no! It's better to just send them back home; there's no point in hosting them.

Another example involves the account @sosmedkeras, which shared a photo capturing Rohingya individuals applying for ID cards in Makassar. This post garnered numerous negative comments, one of which came from the account @anadoh1245, stating, "Clearly reject them; if you give one ID card, the others will follow suit." These instances highlight how echo chambers on platform X can amplify negative perspectives, potentially contributing to the shaping of public opinion against Rohingya refugees.

The echo chamber phenomenon that has enveloped Indonesian netizens is fundamentally rooted in users of platform X primarily engaging with and amplifying negative opinions towards Rohingya refugees who share similar perspectives. This has eventually led to the formation of separate communities within an echo chamber environment (Rashid & Saidin, 2023). An insightful study conducted by drone empirit reveals that the anti-Rohingya cluster tends to converge at the same focal point, mirroring the gathering pattern of the pro-Rohingya cluster in their own distinct echo chamber. This segregated pattern of information consumption and interaction exacerbates the polarization and reinforces the echo chamber effect, where like-minded individuals are continuously exposed to reinforcing views, hindering the development of a more nuanced and balanced understanding of the complex issues at hand.

Figure 3. Rohingya Social Media Map



Based on the explanations and data provided earlier, hate speech against Rohingya refugees tends to be disseminated by anonymous fanbase accounts. These accounts enjoy the freedom to share both positive and negative posts. Furthermore, their substantial follower count, reaching millions, enables them to easily influence other users to adopt perspectives aligned with the negative narratives conveyed by these accounts.

Not only that, the impact of spreading hate speech can lead to the creation of echo chambers or closed groups that hold contrasting views towards Rohingya refugees. This phenomenon occurs because social media users consistently exposed to the same content tend to interact and share information exclusively with those who share similar perspectives. Consequently, clusters are formed that reinforce negative beliefs about Rohingya refugees.

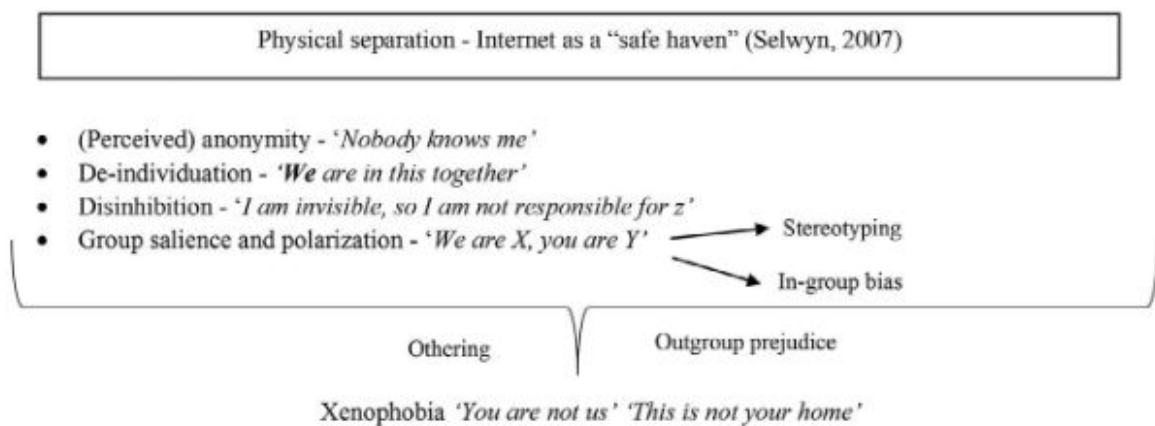
It is crucial to emphasize that when accounts with broad reach disseminate hate speech, it not only affects public perception but also has the potential to trigger wider disapproval and discrimination against the targeted group. The ripple effect of such dissemination goes beyond influencing individual opinions, permeating societal attitudes and contributing to the polarization and stigmatization of Rohingya refugees on a broader scale. As a result, addressing the root causes of hate speech and fostering open dialogue becomes imperative for promoting a more inclusive and empathetic online environment.

### Xenophobia towards Rohingya refugees

Negative narratives regarding Rohingya refugees flooding the X timeline over the past month have given rise to a concerning phenomenon known as Xenophobia. As highlighted by Nurnadilla and Jamil, the digital landscape has played a pivotal role in fostering the proliferation of xenophobic discourses. This is particularly evident due to the presence of three essential elements that contribute to the thriving of online xenophobia within various online civic spaces. Firstly, individuals are provided with ample opportunities to express their views openly. Secondly, there are opportunities to directly

address and exert influence on the perceived "Other." Lastly, there are opportunities to convince the perceived "us" to align with and adopt their perspectives. The digital affordances available in the current online environment have significantly facilitated the amplification of xenophobic sentiments, thereby warranting a critical examination of the impact of these narratives on societal attitudes and behaviors (Siti Nurnadilla & Jamil, 2023).

Figure 4. Digital media affordances in facilitating xenophobia



The term xenophobia, frequently employed by social psychologists, human rights organizations, and the United Nations, serves as a descriptor for anti-immigrant sentiments. According to Miller, xenophobia encompasses attitudes, prejudices, and behaviors that reject, exclude, and often vilify individuals based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society, or national identity (Miller, 2018). Yakushko observes that historically, the term was associated with a fear of outsiders, but more recently, it has become linked with ethnocentrism, characterized by the belief that one's own group or culture is superior to others (Yakushko, 2009).

Watts advances the perspective that xenophobia, defined as the dislike or fear of foreigners, is not merely an inherent prejudice but a discriminatory potential triggered by specific conditions. He contends that when ideologies like ethnocentrism, which involves a belief in one's own culture's superiority, combine with perceived threats, such as foreigners taking jobs, xenophobia becomes activated. This activation can lead to the emergence of "political xenophobia," characterized by a desire for discriminatory policies against foreigners (Watts, 1996).

Furthermore, Misago et al. argue that xenophobia can manifest in various forms, both physical and psychological. This includes extreme actions such as the murder of non-nationals, assaults targeting foreigners, looting and vandalism of foreign-owned businesses, robbery, arson attacks, property burning, intimidation, and threats or eviction notices. The multidimensional nature of xenophobia highlights the urgency of addressing not only its roots but also the diverse ways in which it manifests within societies (Misago et al., 2015).

The fear fueled by the aforementioned misinformation has had a profound impact on Indonesian netizens who uncritically consume hoax information about Rohingya refugees. For instance, when Vice President Ma'ruf Amin announced that the government

was considering relocating Rohingya residents to Pulau Galang in Batam, the majority of netizens quickly responded with negative comments. One example is the user @MasMasBiasa, who commented that even someone with a modest income like him was trying to save up to buy land, suddenly witnessing a group of people with an unknown origin being handed land easily. Meanwhile, those born and bred in Indonesia may not even have the opportunity to own land.

This comment is just one illustration of the deeply rooted ethnocentrism prevailing in Indonesian society, where some individuals perceive themselves as superior to other nations. It also contributes to the fear of being surpassed in land ownership in Indonesia. Another alarming example is the violent attack on Rohingya refugees by approximately 500 students at Balee Meuseuraya Aceh (Aceh Conventional Hall). The incident took a potentially dangerous turn as some students threw objects at the refugees, who were visibly still traumatized. Ultimately, the refugees were compelled to relocate to a different area deemed "safer." The students, on their part, were advocating for the deportation of these refugees to their place of origin and were urging the Aceh governor to issue policies preventing the future influx of Rohingya. This incident not only reflects the extent of xenophobia but also highlights the urgent need to address the underlying issues that contribute to such acts of violence and discrimination against refugees (Azzuhri & Fauzi, 2023).

An atmosphere of hostility that I mentioned above can shape the cultural discourse on immigration and can have detrimental affects on those who are the targets of prejudice toward immigrants. Images of immigrants in the popular culture are often negative and inconsistent. Immigrants are likely to be portrayed in very stereotypical ways as, for example, lazy, criminal, and uneducated (Espenshade & Calhoun, 2024).

Therefore, it is important to consider the experiences of Aceh's community regarding the emergence of xenophobia towards Rohingya on platform X, which led to their rejection and persecution upon their arrival in Indonesia in 2023. This check on the epistemology behind the xenophobia is crucial.

In previous years, Aceh's residents actually opened their doors wide for Rohingya refugees in their area. Approximately 1,000 people were hosted before their latest arrival in December. However, over time, their behavior was deemed disturbing and they were observed to treat the local residents poorly. Consequently, the community now rejects their return.

Similarly, on platform X, native Acehnese like @ryuni shared their negative experiences. She stated, "I am an Acehnese. Initially, we welcomed Rohingya refugees around 2015. But as we observed their increasingly disrespectful behavior, it is understandable why Acehnese people reject them. Especially now, this isn't about being stranded; Aceh has become their destination."

Another Acehnese individual, @wiratamiang, also recounted their experience with Rohingya refugees, saying, "The reason why Acehnese reject Rohingya refugees is not influenced by Myanmar's incitement. We have prior experience hosting them, and unfortunately, they were disrespectful towards the generous hosts. Some even went to the extent of disrespecting local girls. It's natural that many are rejecting them."

The past negative experiences of the local community towards Rohingya refugees, particularly those shared by the indigenous people of Aceh on various platforms, undeniably contribute to the inevitable emergence of discrimination and xenophobic attitudes. Regrettably, the xenophobic phenomenon directed at the Rohingya, which is

categorized as a form of new racism, according to Kenneth Tafira, intensifies deeply rooted sentiments of hatred. This regrettable trend serves as a tragic reflection of how xenophobic views towards the Rohingya can result in significant social and humanitarian consequences (Tafira, 2011).

The narratives and perspectives disseminated by the local community on various platforms, especially in Aceh, inadvertently perpetuate a cycle of negative perceptions and biases against the Rohingya. The deep-seated resentment and prejudice, fueled by historical grievances, continue to shape the attitudes of the local population, making it challenging to foster a more inclusive and compassionate approach towards refugees.

Furthermore, the xenophobic phenomenon, identified as a contemporary manifestation of racism by Tafira, reveals an alarming trend wherein prejudice is directed towards a specific group of people based on their origin and perceived differences. This not only hinders the establishment of a harmonious coexistence but also impedes efforts to address the broader humanitarian concerns surrounding the Rohingya crisis.

In light of Tafira's characterization of xenophobia as a form of new racism, it becomes imperative to recognize and address the underlying factors contributing to these discriminatory attitudes. Efforts to promote awareness, education, and empathy are crucial in breaking the cycle of xenophobia and fostering a more inclusive and tolerant society that acknowledges the shared humanity of all individuals, regardless of their background or origin.

### **Between Rohingya and Palestine in X platform: A Double Standard**

Rohingya and Palestine, two distinct communities united by the shared agony of enduring genocide in their respective countries, find themselves in starkly divergent circumstances when it comes to the response garnered on social media platforms. The solidarity movement, articulated by Abu Ayyash as a transnational advocacy network leading collective action imbued with empathy, resonates profoundly for Palestine across the social media landscape. The sheer magnitude of the solidarity wave in the digital realm is astounding, with even anonymous accounts and diverse fanbases expressing profound sympathy and compassion for the victims of the Palestinian genocide (Abu-Ayyash, 2018).

For instance, the account @kegblgnunfaedh serves as an example of someone disseminating negative sentiments towards the Rohingya community. Paradoxically, this account adopts a hypocritical stance by concurrently expressing support for Palestine. This contradictory behavior is evident in their posts that quote the statement of the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Retno Marsudi, declaring "Indonesia Stands with Palestine."

Similarly, another account, @AREAJULID, shares a photo captioned with "Finally, we can stand together to defend Palestine without having to inquire about our religion."

This collective online activism extends to the creation of impactful hashtags such as #julidfisabilillah, illustrating a concerted effort to engage in cyberwarfare against Israeli social media accounts in a bid to undermine their morale and amplify the voices of those affected (Rostanti, 2023).

In stark contrast, the Rohingya community, despite facing a parallel plight of genocide, encounters a distressing dearth of similar support on social media. Instead of a surge of solidarity akin to that experienced by Palestine, the Rohingya people contend with derision, insults, and an array of negative stigmas in the digital realm. Remarkably, some of the very accounts passionately advocating for Palestine engage in actions that perpetuate the marginalization of the Rohingya, actively contributing to their expulsion. This

paradoxical discrepancy in treatment underscores a disconcerting reality — the selective nature of empathy and support on social media platforms, a phenomenon molded by multifaceted influences such as politics, religion, and public opinion.

This unfair and disparate treatment meted out to these two groups on social media platforms serves as a poignant reflection of the intricate dynamics at play in shaping perceptions and responses to humanitarian tragedies in the digital age. The selective distribution of empathy and support highlights the intricate web of biases, both conscious and subconscious, that dictate the virtual discourse surrounding genocide victims. In a world increasingly interconnected through digital channels, the disparities in how these communities are portrayed and advocated for emphasize the pressing need for a more equitable and universally compassionate approach to humanitarian solidarity in the digital era.

However, one of the reasons for the occurrence of double standards among netizens in Indonesia is the ideological contestation between Islamism and nationalism in the country. We can take the example of demonstrations expressing support for Palestine, which was brutally attacked by Israel, in major cities in Indonesia. On November 5, for instance, a demonstration took place in Jakarta, attended by a majority of conservative Islamists who strongly support Palestine. Even one of the presidential candidates for Indonesia in 2024, Anies Baswedan, participated in this solidarity action to engage with the Islamist community. It is evident that his presence significantly increased his popularity among Islamists (Lanti, 2023). Furthermore, the Palestinian solidarity movement has also spread to the online world, particularly on the X platform. X serves as a platform for pro-Palestinian Islamist activists to spread hashtags such as #BoycottIsrael and #FreePalestine, aiming to showcase the strength of Islamists to the world on social media in massive defense of Palestine (Ulya & Ayu, 2023).

Furthermore, in addition to the pro-Palestine stance among Islamist groups, we also find a strong assumption that those opposing Rohingya refugees are from the ultra-nationalist circles. The rejection frames against Rohingya refugees, as written by Subria Mamis et al, can be categorized into three main motives: Firstly, Senator Syech Fadhil emphasizes the importance of the role of the Central Government in Jakarta in finding a real solution to the arrival of Rohingya refugees in Aceh. He argues that this is not only the responsibility of the local government in Aceh. Secondly, there are concerns that the current focus of the Aceh Government is on dealing with flash floods affecting several areas in Aceh. This indicates a dual pressure on the local government to respond to two different crisis situations. Lastly, the Aceh Government highlights the urgency of the issue affecting the Regional Budget (APBD) of the Aceh Provincial Government. Senator Syech Fadhil also mentions that both the District Government (Pekab) and Provincial Government (Pempov) in Aceh are currently focused on addressing other issues, including the discussion of the Aceh Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBA) and other matters. This statement indicates that the situation in Aceh is complex with several pressing issues (Mamis et al., 2024). Adriana Elizabeth adds that the issue of Rohingya refugees has long been disrupting the domestic situation in the country (Sopamena, 2023).

When comparing the responses on social media from both Islamist and nationalist groups in handling the issues of Palestine and Rohingya, the creation of a double standard in humanitarian issues can be observed through the findings of the Emprit drone research. Positive sentiments towards pro-Palestine actions, for example, receive an 82% positive reaction on the X platform. The pro-Palestine actions are perceived as humanitarian rather

than religious endeavors. On the contrary, negative reactions make up only about 4%, with arguments suggesting that those supporting Palestine may lack historical understanding and are influenced solely by contemporary religious leaders (Fahmi, 2023). In contrast, solidarity actions towards Rohingya refugees receive only a 50% positive sentiment. Arguments claim that the rejection of Rohingya is based on rapidly spreading hoaxes portraying them in a negative light. Negative sentiment towards Rohingya is significant, reaching 33%, with the argument that Rohingya refugees behave poorly and brutally in Indonesia (Fahmi, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

The issue of hate speech towards Rohingya refugees on the X platform is worsened by anonymous fanbase accounts with substantial followers who freely disseminate hateful messages. This strategic use of anonymity fosters a toxic online environment, shaping echo chambers where like-minded individuals reinforce each other's beliefs. These echo chambers have coalesced into strong opposition against Rohingya refugees in Indonesia. Understanding the role of online anonymity is crucial for countering the negative impact on public opinion and social harmony. Another consequence is the emergence of xenophobia within the Indonesian community towards Rohingya refugees, evident in reactions to narratives suggesting they might be granted asylum on an island. Instead of fostering empathy, these narratives fuel resentment and fear, creating an environment where xenophobic sentiments can flourish. Addressing this issue requires dismantling false narratives and promoting a more informed understanding of the plight of Rohingya refugees. Notably, Rohingya refugees lack the same solidarity as Palestinians, despite both facing genocide. Indonesian netizens defend Palestinians with hashtags like #julidfisabilillah, while Rohingya refugees continue to face negative sentiments, further complicated by the irony that the accounts initiating solidarity for Palestine are the same ones generating negativity towards Rohingya refugees.

Nevertheless, the phenomenon of hate speech directed towards Rohingya refugees emerging on platform X cannot be considered a comprehensive representation of similar behavior on other social media platforms such as Facebook or Instagram. Therefore, the statements in this article are not intended to generalize the hate speech expressed by internet users on platforms other than X. The existence of these differences underscores the need for a more in-depth and complex study regarding the sentiments that netizens may express concerning the Rohingya refugee issue on various other platforms.

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