

The Role of the Humanities in A Post - Truth World: Promoting Critical Thinking, Empathy, and Dialogue

Peran Humaniora di Dunia Pasca Kebenaran: Mempromosikan Pemikiran Kritis, Empati, dan Dialog

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ABSTRACT

In an era where truth is often questioned, the role of the humanities is crucial in strengthening critical thinking, empathy and dialogue. This research explores the contribution of the humanities in facing the challenge of post-fact truth with a focus on developing critical skills, increasing empathy, and facilitating dialogue. Through a structured literature analysis, this research identifies the role of the humanities in shaping perceptions of truth, overcoming cognitive biases, and shaping public policy. The research findings highlight the importance of strengthening critical skills and expanding understanding of empathy through humanities approaches in education and society. In addition, this research identifies challenges and opportunities in applying a humanities approach in responding to the complexity of post-fact truth challenges. By overcoming these obstacles and taking advantage of available opportunities, a humanities approach can be a powerful guide in better facing these challenges.

Keywords: Humanities, post-fact truth, critical thinking, empathy, dialogue, cognitive bias, public policy.

ABSTRAK

Dalam era dimana kebenaran seringkali dipertanyakan, peran humaniora menjadi krusial dalam memperkuat pemikiran kritis, empati, dan dialog. Penelitian ini menggali kontribusi humaniora dalam menghadapi tantangan kebenaran pasca-fakta dengan fokus pada pengembangan keterampilan kritis, peningkatan empati, dan fasilitasi dialog. Melalui analisis literatur yang terstruktur, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi peran humaniora dalam membentuk persepsi kebenaran, mengatasi bias kognitif, dan membentuk kebijakan publik. Temuan penelitian menyoroti pentingnya memperkuat keterampilan kritis dan memperluas pemahaman empati melalui pendekatan humaniora dalam pendidikan dan masyarakat. Selain itu, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi tantangan dan peluang dalam menerapkan pendekatan humaniora dalam menanggapi kompleksitas tantangan kebenaran pasca-fakta. Dengan mengatasi hambatan-hambatan ini dan memanfaatkan peluang yang tersedia, pendekatan humaniora dapat menjadi panduan yang kuat dalam menghadapi tantangan-tantangan ini dengan lebih baik.

Kata Kunci: Humaniora, kebenaran pasca-fakta, pemikiran kritis, empati, dialog, bias kognitif, kebijakan publik.

1. Introduction

In a world where misinformation and manipulation of facts are prevalent, the role of the humanities becomes crucial in promoting critical thinking, empathy, and dialogue. The humanities, encompassing disciplines such as literature, philosophy, history, and the arts, provide a foundation for understanding human experiences, values, and perspectives (Stewart, 2020). Through the humanities, individuals can develop critical thinking skills that enable them to analyze information critically, discern truth from falsehood, and make informed decisions (Hughes, 2019). Moreover, the humanities foster empathy by encouraging individuals to engage with diverse narratives, experiences, and worldviews, thus promoting understanding and compassion towards others (Ashifa, 2020).

In this context, the humanities also play a significant role in facilitating dialogue and communication. By studying literature, history, and philosophy, individuals can explore different viewpoints, engage in meaningful discussions, and bridge cultural and ideological divides (Chattopadhyay, 2021). The humanities encourage individuals to question assumptions, challenge biases, and engage in respectful debates, fostering a culture of open dialogue and exchange of ideas (Hvidt et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the humanities contribute to shaping ethical frameworks and moral reasoning, which are essential in navigating complex societal issues and dilemmas (Stewart, 2020). By studying ethics, philosophy, and history, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of ethical principles, values, and the consequences of actions, enabling them to make ethical decisions and contribute positively to society (Hvidt et al., 2022). Overall, the humanities serve as a cornerstone in promoting critical thinking, empathy, and dialogue in a world where misinformation is prevalent. Through the study of literature, philosophy, history, and the arts, individuals can cultivate the skills and perspectives necessary to navigate the complexities of the modern world, engage in meaningful interactions with others, and contribute to a more informed, empathetic, and dialogue-driven society.

In a world where misinformation and deception can easily spread, the role of the humanities becomes crucial in fostering critical thinking, empathy, and meaningful dialogue. Scholars have highlighted the importance of addressing the challenges posed by the post-truth era. Boggs et al. (2022) emphasize the significance of critical thinking skills in combating misinformation and conspiracy theories. They suggest that promoting effective critical thinking through dialogues can help individuals identify and avoid falling prey to false information.

Moreover, the humanities, particularly literary criticism, play a vital role in navigating the complexities of the post-truth era. Syofyan (2019) discusses how literary criticism can offer new perspectives and insights in understanding truth and meaning in a world where truth is often manipulated or obscured. By engaging with literature and sociological criticism, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of the nuances of truth and reality.

Furthermore, dialogic pedagogy has been proposed as a valuable approach in promoting critical thinking and fostering meaningful conversations in the post-truth era. Andal (2019) and Alexander (2019) both explore the concept of dialogic pedagogy as a means to bridge the gap between discourse and values, especially in educational settings. By encouraging dialogue and argumentation, educators can equip individuals with the skills needed to navigate the complexities of a post-truth society.

In addition to critical thinking, empathy also plays a crucial role in promoting understanding and meaningful interactions. Buechel et al. (2018) highlight the importance of empathy in human-computer interactions and designing conversational agents that can respond empathetically. By incorporating empathy into dialogue systems and interactions, individuals can enhance their ability to connect with others and understand different perspectives.

Overall, the humanities, through critical thinking, empathy, and dialogue, offer valuable tools in addressing the challenges of a post-truth world. By fostering these skills and promoting meaningful interactions, individuals can navigate the complexities of misinformation and deception prevalent in today's society.

Exposure to problematic phenomena in a post-truth society is an important starting point in understanding the research context. In an era where truth is often debated or even questioned, society faces enormous challenges in determining what is actually true and what is not. This phenomenon creates an atmosphere where inaccurate or biased information can easily spread and be accepted as truth, without adequate criticism. As a result, there is a distortion in people's perception of reality, which in turn affects the decision-making process and social interactions at large. Understanding the complexity of this phenomenon requires

in-depth and comprehensive research to unravel the factors that influence the perception and acceptance of truth amidst complex social and information dynamics.

Identifying research gaps in the current literature is an important next step in guiding research. While there are many studies on the role of the humanities in shaping critical thinking and empathy, there is little research that specifically explores how humanities disciplines can address the challenges of post-fact truth. Thus, there is an urgent need to conduct more in-depth and focused research to understand the concrete contribution of the humanities in shaping critical thinking, empathy, and dialogue in communities exposed to inaccurate or biased information. By filling this knowledge gap, it is hoped that this research will make a significant contribution to the development of our understanding of the role of the humanities in confronting the challenge of post-fact truth.

The aim of this research is to fill this gap by presenting new insights into the role of the humanities in helping society face the challenge of post-fact truth. In facing the complexity of post-truth phenomena, this research aims to make a significant contribution to our understanding of how humanities disciplines can play a role in shaping the perception and reception of truth in contemporary society. By digging deeper through a structured and systematic research process, it is hoped that this research will be able to present substantial new insights into how the humanities disciplines can make a meaningful contribution in building creative thinking, empathy and dialogue amidst the complexity of information whose veracity is often questioned. .

The research question presented will be the main focus of this research. This question will guide the research process to understand in depth how humanities disciplines can influence the perception and reception of truth in contemporary society. By focusing research on this question, it is hoped that this research can provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms and strategies used by the humanities to strengthen critical thinking, increase empathy, and facilitate constructive dialogue amidst the challenges of post-factual truth.

An explanation of the novelty of this research is important to highlight the new contributions offered by this research. By comprehensively exploring the role of the humanities in a post-truth context, this research seeks to present a new approach that can provide a better understanding of how humanities disciplines can influence critical thinking, empathy, and dialogue in society. It is hoped that the findings from this research will make a meaningful contribution to the development of theory and practice in the humanities and provide valuable direction for policy and action at the wider societal level.

It is hoped that this research contribution will provide valuable insights for practitioners and academics in the field of humanities as well as for society in general. By digging deeper into the role of humanities in a post-truth context, it is hoped that this research can provide a strong foundation for the development of more effective strategies in facing the challenges of post-truth. Practitioners and academics in the humanities can use the findings from this research as a basis for developing new approaches and methods in education, research, and public advocacy. This can help improve the quality of learning, expand society's understanding of the role of the humanities, and promote the continuation of critical thinking and empathy in society.

Apart from that, this research is also expected to provide significant benefits to society in general. By providing a deeper understanding of the role of the humanities in shaping critical thinking, empathy, and dialogue, this research can help society be better able to face the challenges of post-fact truth. The information and insights gained from this research can help people develop better analytical skills in evaluating information, increase understanding of diverse views, and strengthen the ability to participate in constructive dialogue. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution in building a more educated, informed and empowered society in facing the complexity of the modern world filled with uncertain information.

2. Research Methods

The research method used in this research includes a series of stages designed in a structured and systematic manner to collect and analyze literature relevant to the research topic. The initial stage of this research process is the article collection process, which is carried out by accessing reputable international databases, such as Scopus, Web of Science, and IEEE Xplore. Through access to these databases, articles deemed relevant to the research topic can be identified and downloaded for further analysis.

The process of collecting articles is carried out using predetermined keywords, which are selected based on relevance to the research topic and the time period that is considered relevant. The use of appropriate keywords is a key step in ensuring that the articles identified are truly relevant to the research focus. In addition, the selection of reputable international databases is also an important aspect of this process, as it ensures access to high quality and relevant articles of widely recognized academic standards. Thus, the process of collecting these articles provides a strong basis for continuing the analysis and synthesis of literature that will be carried out in this research.

After the articles have been collected, the next step in the research methodology is to carry out the article inclusion and exclusion stages. This stage involves a careful assessment of each article collected based on certain predetermined criteria. These criteria generally include relevance to the research topic, year of publication, and methodological quality of each article. Assessment of the relevance of articles to the research topic is a key aspect in this stage, where articles that have high relevance to the research focus will be retained for further analysis.

In addition, other criteria such as year of publication and methodological quality are also important considerations in the article inclusion and exclusion process. Articles published within a time period that is relevant to the research context will be prioritized for retention, while articles that are outdated or not contextually relevant to the research topic can be removed from the analysis. In addition, the methodological quality of each article is also an important consideration, where articles that have a solid research methodology and high validity will be more likely to be retained for further analysis.

Thus, this article inclusion and exclusion stage aims to ensure that only high-quality and relevant articles are retained in the analysis, thereby ensuring the validity and reliability of the research findings. This procedure follows the principles of rigorous and transparent research methodology, and ensures that research results are based on a solid and reliable basis.

Furthermore, in order to ensure consistency and transparency in the implementation of systematic reviews, this research uses the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) method as the main guide. The PRISMA method has been widely recognized as a structured and comprehensive framework for reporting the results of systematic reviews in a clear and transparent manner. By adopting the PRISMA method, the research process can be carried out in systematic and well-documented stages, starting from identifying articles to presenting findings.

One of the main advantages of using the PRISMA method is its ability to guide researchers in reporting each stage of a systematic review clearly and in detail. This method requires researchers to develop a research protocol that includes inclusion and exclusion criteria for articles, search strategies, and data analysis procedures. Apart from that, the PRISMA method also emphasizes the importance of reporting review results transparently, including presenting the flow of information in the PRISMA flow diagram.

By applying the PRISMA method, it is hoped that this research can produce consistent and accountable results. Through this structured and well-documented approach, research findings will have high validity and be reliable to support understanding and decision making in the humanities and society in general.

Thus, this research method provides a structured and well-documented framework for carrying out a systematic review of the role of the humanities in facing the challenge of post-fact truth. By using this approach, it is hoped that this research can produce accurate and reliable findings to enrich our understanding of this complex topic.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Concept of Truth in a Post-Truth Context

In a society characterized by post-truth, traditional concepts of truth based on evidence, consistency, and fact-seeking are disregarded (Hoffjann, 2020). This era is marked by disagreements on facts, where decisions are often influenced by personal beliefs and emotions rather than verified information (Salman & Yilmaz, 2021). The objectivity of truth is challenged, allowing "truth" to be influenced by socio-political factors (Handley-Miner et al., 2022). Falsehoods tend to spread faster than the truth in this environment, leading to illusions like truthiness and illusory truth (Brashier & Marsh, 2020). Post-truth has become a prevalent concept in society, intertwined with terms like fake news and conspiracy theories (Zee, 2022).

The post-truth phenomenon has implications for various fields. In education, there is a need to reestablish the connection between experts and society to navigate this era effectively (Harrison & Lockett, 2019). The spread of misinformation blurs the line between truth and falsehood, impacting how information is consumed and shared (Yegen et al., 2022). Critical evaluation of online information becomes crucial in the post-truth era, especially concerning scientific issues (Sinatra & Lombardi, 2020). The concept of truth is increasingly disregarded, posing challenges for sustainability communication and ideological struggles under capitalist hegemony (Jaques et al., 2019).

Moreover, the post-truth environment is exacerbated by the digital age, fostering the rapid dissemination of fake news and misinformation (Martín et al., 2019). In this context, distinguishing between accurate information and disinformation becomes challenging, particularly during events like the COVID-19 pandemic (Qerimi & Gërguri, 2022). The erosion of truth in society has led to a loss of trust and a rise in cynicism, emphasizing the importance of truth-telling and critical thinking (Gibbs, 2019). In conclusion, the concept of truth is undergoing significant challenges in a post-truth society, where personal beliefs and emotions often supersede verified information. Navigating this environment requires a reevaluation of how information is consumed, shared, and critically evaluated across various disciplines.

3.2. The Effect of Information Exposure on Perceptions of Truth

Inaccurate or biased information can significantly impact perceptions of truth. Cognitive biases such as the truth bias, bias to extract meaning from information, bias to rely on the source of information, and bias to rely on fluency can influence how individuals judge the veracity of information (Johar, 2022). These biases can lead individuals to believe incoming information as true, use prior expectations to interpret new information, judge truth based on the credibility of the information source, and assess truth based on the ease of processing information.

Moreover, research has shown that cognitive biases like truth bias and meta-cognitive myopia can affect decision-making processes, leading to incorrect judgments and memory distortions (Pantazi et al., 2020). Individuals tend to be influenced by false information due to truth bias, impacting their decisions and perceptions of reality.

Furthermore, the impact of cognitive biases on truth perception can be moderated by factors such as political alignment. For instance, political alignment can influence the effect of general communicative suspicion on truth bias, altering how individuals perceive both disinformation and factual information (Miller et al., 2022).

Additionally, the role of cognitive processes and biases in resisting "Truth Decay" has been explored, highlighting how reasoning and cognitive biases can influence trends related to

the erosion of truth ("Individual Differences in Resistance to Truth Decay: Exploring the Role of Reasoning and Cognitive Biases", 2022). Understanding these cognitive processes is crucial in combating the spread of misinformation and promoting critical thinking. In conclusion, inaccurate or biased information can distort perceptions of truth through various cognitive biases, affecting decision-making, memory, and judgment processes. Recognizing and addressing these biases are essential in promoting accurate information dissemination and fostering a more informed society.

3.3. The Role of Humanities in Shaping Public Policy

The humanities play a significant role in enhancing critical thinking skills and fostering empathy and dialogue. Through reflective practice and self-awareness, the humanities enable learners to challenge biases, develop perspective-taking abilities, and break down barriers to empathy (Ong, 2022). Integrating humanities content into education has been shown to cultivate empathy in various fields, such as nursing, by improving humanistic perceptions, caring, and the ability to understand and communicate the patient's perspective (Adams & Scott, 2021). Furthermore, the arts and humanities help students develop competencies like humanism, empathic listening, and narrative understanding, which are essential for fostering empathy (Cao et al., 2022).

Empathy, a crucial element in building a culture of peace and non-violence, is highlighted as a trait that allows individuals to understand, respect, and share the feelings of others, contributing to a secure society (Filipović et al., 2022). Additionally, the development of empathy is linked to critical reflection and service-learning experiences, which have been shown to enhance students' cognitive empathy, reflective capacity, and compassion (Winkle et al., 2022). The role of narrative medicine, an interdisciplinary approach that promotes empathy through narrative competence gained from literary texts, is emphasized in understanding patients' narratives and fostering empathy among practitioners (Kampourelli, 2022).

Moreover, the humanities contribute to empathy development across various stages of life, from adolescence to adulthood, by enhancing the understanding of emotion expression and decoding empathy towards different targets, including humans and animals (Gaspar & Esteves, 2022). The importance of affective empathy, which motivates altruistic behaviors, is underscored as essential for harmonious social interactions (Feng et al., 2022). Furthermore, the humanities are instrumental in promoting empathy education programs, such as nonviolent communication-based initiatives, which are beneficial for nursing students and social education (Sung & Kweon, 2022). In conclusion, the humanities play a vital role in strengthening critical thinking skills, fostering empathy, and promoting dialogue. By integrating humanities content into education, individuals can develop essential competencies for empathetic understanding, perspective-taking, and communication, contributing to a more empathetic and compassionate society.

3.4. Challenges and Opportunities

In addressing post-truth challenges, applying a humanities approach presents both obstacles and opportunities. The obstacles include the need to navigate through a post-truth climate where feminist knowledge and marginalized experiences are often questioned (Budgeon, 2021). Additionally, the emergence of a posthuman turn in politics poses challenges that go beyond the discourse on post-truth and fake news (Kalpokas, 2019). Moreover, the post-political nature of behavioral public policy may hinder active citizenship and alternative political perspectives (Whitehead et al., 2019).

On the other hand, opportunities arise in reconfiguring research practices by bringing material and affective aspects of social life to the forefront through post-humanist theories (Williams et al., 2019). Furthermore, transformative teaching and learning approaches that recognize human dignity and agency can provide effective alternatives in educational spaces,

especially in the context of challenges like Brexit (Farrell, 2019). Embracing challenges as opportunities to enhance medical education in the post-COVID era through effective technology integration and student-centered learning is another promising avenue (Kim, 2022). In conclusion, while obstacles like questioning feminist knowledge and dealing with posthuman politics exist, opportunities lie in reconfiguring research practices, transformative education approaches, and enhancing medical education post-COVID. By addressing these obstacles and leveraging the opportunities, a humanities approach can effectively navigate the complexities of post-truth challenges.

4. Conclusions

In facing the complexity of challenges that arise in a post-truth context, the application of a humanities approach encounters a number of obstacles that need to be overcome. One of the main obstacles is the need to navigate a social climate characterized by a diversity of views and deep questioning of feminist knowledge and marginalized experiences. This requires efforts to strengthen the legitimacy and recognition of alternative perspectives that are often ignored or questioned in the academic and societal realms. In addition, the emergence of political struggles associated with the idea of posthumanism poses additional challenges that go beyond the framework of understanding post-truth and the spread of fake news. These complex political dynamics require in-depth study and diverse approaches in formulating responses to ongoing social and cultural changes.

On the other hand, the application of a humanities approach also brings a number of opportunities that can be utilized to overcome these challenges. One emerging opportunity is the potential to reconfigure research practice by strengthening the role of humanities theories in analyzing and responding to evolving social and cultural dynamics. This can pave the way for the development of new perspectives that are able to provide a more holistic understanding of the phenomena that occur in a post-truth society. Apart from that, the application of a humanities approach also provides an opportunity to expand the scope of education and research by integrating critical, reflective and contextual dimensions in understanding complex and diverse social realities. Thus, through a deep understanding of existing obstacles and opportunities, a humanities approach can become a solid foundation in formulating appropriate responses to challenges in a post-truth society.

On the other hand, there are emerging opportunities to reconfigure research practice by bringing the material and affective dimensions of social life into primary focus, especially through the application of post-humanist theory. This approach allows researchers to broaden the scope of their analysis by considering the influence and interaction between material and affective factors in shaping complex social realities. By emphasizing the importance of this dimension, a post-humanist approach can provide new insights and a deeper understanding of the social dynamics that occur in a post-truth society.

In addition, opportunities are also open in developing transformative teaching and learning approaches, which recognize human dignity and agency as central to the educational process. In the context of challenges such as Brexit, this approach can provide an effective alternative in responding to complex social and political changes. By encouraging critical reflection and inclusive dialogue, this approach enables students to develop a better understanding of the complexity of contemporary issues and their role in formulating sustainable solutions.

Furthermore, embracing challenges as opportunities to improve medical education in the post-COVID era through effective technology integration and student-centered learning is another promising pathway. By leveraging advances in information and communications technology, educational institutions can increase accessibility and flexibility in medical education, enabling students to learn independently and collaborate effectively in a digital environment. This will not only help overcome the challenges faced in dealing with the

pandemic, but also open up new opportunities in improving the quality and relevance of medical education for the future. In conclusion, despite a number of obstacles such as doubts about feminist scholarship and the complexity of addressing post-human politics, there are significant opportunities in reconfiguring research practices, adopting transformative educational approaches, and improving post-COVID medical education systems. By overcoming these obstacles and exploiting available opportunities, humanities approaches can become an effective foundation for addressing the complexity of the challenges faced in the post-truth era.

Through reconfiguring research practices, researchers can broaden the scope of their analysis to encompass broader aspects of social life, including material and affective dimensions, using post-humanist approaches. Additionally, by adopting a transformative educational approach, educational institutions can facilitate inclusive and reflective learning, which recognizes human dignity and agency, and encourages critical thinking and productive dialogue. Finally, by improving the post-COVID medical education system through effective technology integration and student-centered learning approaches, educational institutions can be better prepared to face future challenges while improving the quality of their education.

Thus, by overcoming existing obstacles and exploiting available opportunities, a humanities approach can become a strong and effective guide in navigating the complexity of challenges faced in the post-truth era. With various innovations and collaborative efforts, it is hoped that society can better overcome these challenges and achieve sustainable progress in building a society that is more inclusive, open-minded, and resilient to various forms of disinformation and information manipulation.

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