CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Social media has now become an integral part of global society. According to the Global Overview Report, there are nearly 5 billion people or 62.3% of the world's population who actively use social media (Simon Kemp, 2024). The high use of social media proves how important the role of social media is in influencing various aspects of life, and therefore requires a quality, transparent, safe, and fair platform for expression for its users(Hemsley et al., 2018). However, the reality is that social media has problems with centralized control, that often violates the privacy and security of user data. An example is Facebook and Twitter, acted by deleting and suspending accounts that expressed support for the 2019 Hong Kong protests. These emphasizes the potential for abuse of social media platforms by governments or entities, which can compromise users' safety, fairness and freedom of expression (Nagappa, 2023).

Addressing the problem of centralized control by social media platforms, many researchers are interested in finding solutions to the problem. Such as Niu, Gao, Zhang, and Gong (2023), who proposed a decentralized approach to content moderation using blockchain technology. The research shows that the concept of decentralized networks is a solution to the problem of centralized control, using blockchain as the main infrastructure that can strengthen security and empower users more broadly.

Decentralized social media is a social platform concept that empowers users without centralized control. Decentralized social media uses smart contracts to run the platform, allowing direct automation activities according to predefined rules so that no intermediaries are needed (Litvitckaian Kristina et al., 2023). The Decentralized Finance (DeFi) concept used on the platform makes transactions, content monetization more secure and transparent. In addition, self-governance by users makes this platform very useful for users who can interact peer to peer. To

solve problems or violations on the platform, a Decentralized Autonomous Organization (DAO) system is implemented. With this mechanism, rule compliance issues can be resolved democratically through voting and violating users will automatically be expelled according to community rules. Metaverse is also used on this platform to enhance the digital experience of its users. It seems that this transformation is a new beginning for social media in a safer and fairer direction. However, innovation must continue as there are still many challenges to be solved such as complicated blockchain technology learning, regulation, and lack of user understanding of the new governance (Bari Mohammed et al., 2022).

This paper uses a qualitative approach with literature review techniques, interviews, and phenomenological studies to describe and map the transformation of social media towards decentralization involving blockchain. Unlike most research that focuses more on technical direction and case studies. Our goal is to provide users with guidelines and understanding of new interactions to accelerate adoption, drive innovation, and provide important solutions to address privacy and freedom of expression challenges in the industry.