Citizenry Connect: Exploring Digital Communication Landscape Via Social Media in East Kalimantan, Indonesia

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Abstract. This study seeks to elucidate the function of social media as a digital platform for communication among citizens. Social media has fundamentally altered the mode of citizen communication, shifting it from traditional to digital platforms. Social media has emerged as the primary platform for digital citizenship communication across a wide range of interactions, including those with colleagues, family members, and the general public. The study employs a digital ethnographic methodology, utilizing in-depth interviews and digital participatory observations to investigate the internet generations in East-Kalimantan, Indonesia. The study reveals that social media significantly contributes to the establishment of democratic, interactive, and participatory communication norms. Additionally, the study revealed that media social platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook have emerged as prominent avenues for digital communication in everyday civic engagements.

Keywords: Social Media, Digital Platform, Digital Ethnography, Digital Communication, civic Engagements.

1 Introduction

The advancement of digital technology has caused a transformation in the pattern of citizenship communication in Indonesia. The traditional paradigm of citizen communication is progressively evolving into a framework centered around the internet and digital technology. Citizen communication practices are becoming strategic, rapid, impactful, and streamlined. Since the emergence of social media, the communication pattern has experienced significant transformations, giving rise to a new kind of communication known as digital communication. This mode of communication reduces the need for in-person interactions. Therefore, social media has become a crucial component of communication for every individual in. This phenomenon can be attributed to the growing use of many social media platforms as a means of interpersonal contact. Social media has emerged as a replacement for the contemporary mode of citizen interaction. The impact of this phenomenon has caused significant changes in the behavior of internet users across many countries globally [1].

WhatsApp is a popular social media tool extensively utilized for digital communication activities in Indonesia. WhatsApp is a versatile messaging service that enables users to exchange messages, participate in online conversations, and share

files, images, videos, and more. Public-oriented social medial platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, X (previously known as Twitter), YouTube, and TikTok, are commonly used as conduits for individuals to share information, connect, and communicate with one other [2]. The utilization of social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok has witnessed a surge in popularity owing to the advantages offered by social media. Put simply, social media has been widely used by the public as the main method for establishing digital connection between people and the public.

The creation of online discussion communities and Facebook groups by internet users is not surprising. Facebook discussion groups are created for several goals, including serving as venues for exchanging information, facilitating interaction, and enabling digital communication among individuals who share common views and interests. Concurrently, numerous Facebook groups are established as platforms for facilitating communication among individuals. Furthermore, messaging platforms such as WhatsApp are progressively employed to enhance civic communication by establishing diverse WhatsApp groups. Nevertheless, numerous WhatsApp groups are established exclusively for the purpose of exchanging information among individuals who share common interests. Some WhatsApp groups are intentionally formed to serve as thematic forums for debate. There is a lack of discussion groups focused on specific academic disciplines such as, sociology, psychology, communication, accounting, engineering, medicine, or other topic areas. Essentially, the WhatsApp platform is mostly used as a means of digital communication between residents and has not been widely employed to create topical discussion forums.

In this particular environment, when it comes to topic discussion spaces, the general population continues to make use of public social media sites such as Facebook. Meanwhile, Instagram is primarily utilized as an information platform due to its absence of specialized functionalities for facilitating open discussion groups. In contrast, the Facebook platform offers a wide range of tools that facilitate the creation of interactive and bi-directional discussion areas. Facebook provides ample space for expressing personal viewpoints due to its unrestricted characteristics for textual content [3]. In contrast to social media platforms like X, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, which lack provisions for forming digital discussion groups and impose restrictions on textual content. While closed online discussion groups do exist among X users, they rely on messenger group capabilities and maintain a relatively high level of privacy.

Hence, citizen digital communication on social media manifests as conversational patterns established on platforms such as WhatsApp. The conversation model prioritizes the genuine representation of reality in traditional communication. This implies that the constructed talks accurately depict the genuine and unaltered interactions that take place in everyday communication. Conversations originating from digital communication and conventional communication are essentially indistinguishable. Conversations initiated in the digital realm can give rise to novel channels of connection for individuals. This results in the formation of numerous

WhatsApp groups, each representing different everyday activities of individuals. These groups expand in accordance with the individual's identity and interests.

The establishment of diverse groups on social media, whether private or public in nature, serves to underscore the capacity of social media to enhance digital communication among citizens. Furthermore, social media are constantly introducing new features to enhance their usability as the main method of digital communication for the general population. This is apparent from the rise of business functionalities on platforms such as WhatsApp Business, Instagram Business, and Facebook Business, catering to business professionals. The implementation of these elements can offer advantages, particularly for business professionals, in enhancing digital contact with clients and consumers.

Prior research has thoroughly examined the importance of social media as the main platform for digital communication among citizens [4]. This is apparent in the utilization of social media to enhance corporate communication among individuals. In addition, social media offers numerous advantages to domestic workers in terms of facilitating communication with their distant family members [5]. Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, social media has emerged as a vital platform to fulfill the communication requirements of the community [6]. In the discipline of economic studies, some individuals utilize social media as an additional means to promote openness and digital responsibility [7]. Therefore, social media has emerged as the primary platform for businesses and public organizations to enhance their communication channels [8]. In the political sphere, social media serves as the main platform for digital contact with the public. Social media in politics is employed to exert influence over political behavior by shaping public opinion.

Hence, many applications of social media by all entities and public organizations serve numerous objectives. Social media is employed as a digital communication tool in crisis management efforts within the framework of governance [9]. The efficacy of these many applications underscores the fact that social media can function as a communication medium that has the capacity to establish networks among individuals. Put simply, social media has emerged as a groundbreaking means of communication that can swiftly incorporate public relations approaches into the overall communication process [10]. The need for new innovations in citizen communication arises from the inadequacy and lack of integration in conventional communication patterns, therefore leading to the emergence of social media. Hence, the emergence of social media can foster a novel communication strategy for both individuals and institutions [11].

Another study asserts that social media can serve as a communication platform to enhance public engagement in transitioning from traditional offline donation models to online donations. An example of this may be seen in the case of www.kitabisa.com , a public organization that utilize communication tactics via leveraging social media platforms. The tactical approach entails generating and publishing diverse content comprising of stories and videos for each campaign on social media . The use of

social media into online contribution campaigns highlights the effectiveness of social media as a communication platform for digital citizenship.

Hence, numerous studies highlight the efficacy of social media as a key means of communication for various entities, ranging from enterprises to public organizations. Prior research has primarily concentrated on elucidating the function of social media as a means of digital citizenship communication. No exhaustive analysis of the utilization of social media as communication channels for digital citizenship has been discovered thus far. This article is distinguished from earlier ones by this aspect. This will examine the function of social media in facilitating digital citizenship communication.

2   Research Methods

In discussing the research issue, a digital ethnography approach was used. Digital ethnography is a methodology that is a component of ethnography, as explained by [12] in their research. Thus, digital ethnography serves as a valuable tool for exploring the significance and cultural aspects of the digital media landscape [13]. Digital ethnography recognizes the significance of digital technologies, particularly social media, in the daily lives of individuals. Thereby, digital ethnography seeks to comprehend patterns and structures of societal behavior in the digital realm. As a result, researchers have the freedom to use a more adaptable approach to analyze different phenomena happening in the digital world. Understanding the dynamics of digital ethnography requires a keen awareness of the researcher's impact on data collection, whether they are present online or in person. Researchers need to accurately document different events, which are later transformed into field notes, and engage in reflection and analysis while conducting their research [14].

Therefore, the researchers fully engage in the lives and activities of the informants, acquiring a firsthand comprehension of the actual occurrences. Through active engagement in the lives of informants, researchers can accurately perceive the truth, as there is frequently a disparity between verbal expressions and actual behavior. Through this immersion, a multitude of social practices, novel systems, and hitherto unexplored digital cultures might arise. The research spans a duration of twelve months, equivalent to one year, and includes ten key informants who are representative of the internet generation in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. The informant categories are determined by several criteria, which include: (1) individuals belonging to the internet generation who devote a substantial amount of time to social media, (2) frequent users of social media for digital communication, (3) individuals who actively participate in different entities and organizations for communication purposes via social media, and (4) those who share their experiences through their social media accounts.

When conducting digital ethnography research, it is important to start by formulating research questions that are based on social media platforms and supported by relevant literature. These questions will guide the research and help to elaborate on the chosen

topics. Participatory observation is the second stage of the learning process. Researchers actively engage with informants on social media platforms, allowing them to directly witness and analyze the real-time dynamics that unfold. Furthermore, the researchers utilized in-depth interviews to gather additional data that was not captured through participatory observations [15]. Afterwards, classify the results as the attitude and conduct of the informant, following which the collected data has been analyzed and interpreted. In conclusion, the findings of this research are derived from a combination of interviews, participatory observations, and supporting literature. This allows for a comprehensive summary of the final results.

3   Exploring the Impact of Social Media Platforms on Digital Communication

Social media refers to a collection of online applications that allow users to create and share content. Social media is a complex and advanced form of media that can be categorized into different types, including magazines, internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, photos or images, video ratings, and social bookmarks. In addition, social media has distinct characteristics and inherent qualities. First and foremost, it operates as a tool, application, platform, and online medium that relies on information technology. Furthermore, social media serves as a platform for engaging and interactive communication, allowing users to exchange ideas and collaborate with one another. Social media possesses the ability to link users, creating a digital community that spans various platforms, ultimately impacting user behavior in the physical world [16]. As a result, social media acts as a powerful communication tool that allows individuals to share their thoughts, connect with others, and have a significant impact on a wide audience [17].

Using social media as the main platform for digital citizenship communication clearly shows that communication methods have changed with the rise of these platforms. There are several crucial indicators to consider: (1) The communicator is someone who shares messages or ideas, requiring strong communication skills, a positive mindset, and a broad understanding. (2) The message is formed by the conversion of thoughts, emotions, and ideas into encoded content or information, which is then decoded by the recipients. (3) The media acts as the conduit through which messages are received by our senses. (4) The recipient refers to the individual who receives ideas or messages from communicators. (5) The impact, reflecting the responses or reactions generated by communicative activities or how recipients interpret them. (6) Feedback, which consists of communicative responses throughout the communicative process. (7) Communicative disturbances refer to various disruptions that can hinder effective communication. These disruptions can include psychological, physical, semantic, and mechanical interferences. It is important to consider the environment when studying the communication process. Communication does not happen in isolation, but it is influenced by various factors. Understanding and measuring these key indicators in the communication process is crucial for achieving effective two-way communication.

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the emergence of disruptive technologies has sparked a wave of innovation, fundamentally transforming traditional practices into digital-centric ones. Technological disruption has the potential to replace and transform human jobs, ultimately making tasks more manageable. In the world of digital technology, there is a notable shift known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This shift is marked by the widespread use of the Internet of Things (IoT). Based on the most recent data from We are social, the number of internet users in Indonesia stands at around 213.73 million as of January 2023. Out of these, approximately 167 million are active social media users. It is interesting to observe how technological disruption has changed the way people think about citizenship, thanks to the power of digital technology in providing instant information.

Under these conditions, the general public has unrestricted access to a wide range of information. In the digital era, content visualization through images and videos tends to dominate both space and time. This content quickly becomes apparent and is further strengthened by the prevalence of numerous social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, X, YouTube, and TikTok. These social media platforms are extensively used by the tech-savvy generations in Indonesia. However, the social media platforms favored by the tech-savvy generation are Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok, and X. The provided data signifies an analysis that was carried out by researchers utilizing participant-collected information. This article aims to delve into the interconnectedness of the social media platforms Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp. Meanwhile, in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, a wide range of platforms are being utilized by the tech-savvy generation, businesses, and public organizations in their day-today activities. These platforms are widely appreciated for their effectiveness, efficiency, and user-friendly nature in a wide range of daily activities, particularly communication. Here is a detailed breakdown of the social media platforms commonly used by the tech-savvy population in East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia:

First of all, WhatsApp is widely recognized as the leading messaging application that offers a range of features and user-friendly interface for seamless customer communication. Messaging applications such as WhatsApp have rapidly emerged as the dominant platform for global digital citizenship communication, thanks to their unparalleled speed and the ability to connect with individuals across the globe. WhatsApp is a popular social media platform among the Indonesian community, serving as a primary digital communication channel. Based on data from Business of Apps, the total number of WhatsApp users in first quartal of 2023 reached 112 million users, placing it third on the list of countries with the highest number of users globally. WhatsApp is a popular platform within the East Kalimantan community, acting as a key digital communication channel. Based on information from APTIKA (the Indonesian abbreviation for Asosiasi Pengguna Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi, which translates to the Association of Information and Communication Technology Users), 82% of the East Kalimantan population uses WhatsApp. Furthermore, a significant proportion of firms have employed WhatsApp as a means of cost-free communication with their customers and consumers. Consequently,

WhatsApp has facilitated businesses in effectively engaging with customers or consumers across different geographical areas. In addition, this messaging platform offers users the capability to exchange text messages and engage in voice or video calls with numerous individuals concurrently.

Conventional approaches to acquiring communication patterns are gradually being supplanted by digital platforms such as WhatsApp. The process of communicating citizenship-related matters has been streamlined, accelerated, and optimized. Through the utilization of the chat column, individuals can engage in conversation that simulates a face-to-face interaction by just exchanging text. WhatsApp has seen advancements in its features, enabling users to engage in video-based telephone communication, commonly known as video calls. Moreover, video calls have the capability to accommodate more than two individuals or perhaps a sizeable gathering. WhatsApp incorporates a dedicated functionality called WhatsApp Business, which facilitates commercial entities in enhancing their digital marketing and promotional efforts.

WhatsApp not only has the story feature, but it can also establish connections with the Facebook and Instagram platforms. Businesses may effortlessly advertise their products and services by utilizing WhatsApp Business, while also establishing connections with Facebook and Instagram. WhatsApp is extensively utilized by individuals to create communication channels via WhatsApp Groups. Multiple studies indicate that WhatsApp Groups have a significant impact on the transmission of information, the facilitation of debates, and the influence on diverse policies, particularly within college settings [18], [19]. This study highlights that WhatsApp Groups demonstrate the usefulness of social media as a means of facilitating digital citizenship conversation in East Kalimantan as it is the most widely used social media application in Indonesia. Some informants assert that communication over WhatsApp yields numerous advantages. WhatsApp is a popular social media platform that is commonly utilized for interpersonal contact with friends, relatives, and family members. With the introduction of WhatsApp, communication has been widely seen as expedited, simplified, and more convenient. Moreover, they also highlight their active engagement in WhatsApp groups due to the very efficient nature of communication, particularly among school alumni and college friends. Indeed, by means of WhatsApp groups, individuals, can partake in more vigorous and expeditious contact, even while situated in disparate geographical regions.

Meanwhile, Instagram is a social media platform primarily focuses on sharing photos and videos. Users have the ability to shoot images, film videos, apply digital effects, and distribute them through other social networking sites. Instagram is a highly popular social media that is widely utilized by the tech-savvy generation in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. According to We Are Social, the number of Instagram users in Indonesia reached 104.8 million in October 2023. This places Indonesia in fourth position among the top 10 nations with the greatest global user count. Businesses predominantly go for Instagram as their primary platform to advertise and market their products and services to the general public. This platform functions as a prominent source of information, facilitating communication through the provision of

messaging, chat, and other supplementary services. Hence, the technologically adept generation favors utilizing Instagram due to its ability to enable knowledge retrieval, engagement, and correspondence among peers, as articulated by the informants. According to this study, eight out of ten individuals surveyed in this study confessed to being active Instagram users. Among the most followed Instagram accounts in East Kalimantan are @info_kaltim, @balikpapanku, @kaltimku, @bontang_ku, @bontangterkini, @kaltiminfoid, @balikpapances, and @info_balikpapan. The informants utilize Instagram to actively search for the most up-to-date information, particularly about current trends. Furthermore, it functions as a medium for engaging with college acquaintances and former schoolmates. This relationship manifests as interpersonal dialog between acquaintances, including both long-standing friends and relatives. Instagram enables them to jointly monitor one another and interact more swiftly.

Furthermore, Facebook is another social networking site that enables users to create profiles with photographs, contact information, and personal particulars. Facebook users have the ability to participate in communities, which enables them to engage and communicate with other people. Facebook is used for a range of citizenship activities, encompassing personal, business, and public entity endeavors, including political groups. As of April 2023, the total count of Facebook users in Indonesia stood at 135.05 million, as reported by We Are Social Statistics. Facebook has become an essential tool for political candidates in Indonesia to communicate their different political perspectives to the public [20]. Based on the study, nearly seven out of ten people in East Kalimantan use Facebook as one of the social media communication channels that they communicate through. A number of Facebook groups, including the East Kalimantan Tourism group, East Kalimantan Buy & Sale Forum, the East Kalimantan Exchange Job group, the East Kalimantan News Information group, Buy & Sale Samarinda group, FJB KALTIM, the East Kalimantan United, and Bubuhan Kalimantan Timur group, were among the groups that were most frequently followed by the individuals who provided information. Significantly, there exists a multitude of Facebook groups centered around shared political ideas. Facebook functions as the main platform for citizens to participate in topic debates through digital communication. Put simply, Facebook can serve as the main platform for communication around digital citizenship.

Meanwhile, Facebook is extensively utilized in the business sphere as a promotional and communication platform for firms to establish connections with other businesses, clients, and consumers as discussed above. Furthermore, in the context of business, this platform is commonly utilized to establish diverse community-oriented organizations. These groups expand in accordance with their individual interests. Facebook's presence can have a substantial impact on the growth of corporate entities in the civic sector. This is due to the fact that Facebook provides a variety of capabilities that can be utilized for business and digital commerce activity. Facebook offers a Fan page that can attract unlimited public attention, along with Stories, similar to Instagram and WhatsApp, which serve as a platform for public promotion. Facebook is a highly successful platform for digital citizenship communication because to its versatility in facilitating numerous activities. Some informants express

the same sentiment. They utilized Facebook as a means of communication with both familiar and unfamiliar individuals within the digital realm. Despite encountering difficulties with WhatsApp, people frequently turn to utilizing Facebook as a means to greet and connect with their friends. Although they may not be particularly active on Facebook, they consider it to be quite valuable for current digital communication channels.

The research findings confirm that Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp have enhanced the communication channels for digital citizenship. Moreover, apart from those platforms, there are numerous other platforms that are extensively utilized as mediums for digital citizenship communication. YouTube and TikTok are also highly effective and efficient platforms for community communication. According to multiple research, YouTube is a highly efficient medium for religious outreach [21], [22]. X is another commonly utilized platform among the tech-savvy age. Nevertheless, the user count for X is rather low due to its unique attributes in comparison to other platforms. X primarily emphasizes textual information and is restricted to a maximum of 280 characters. However, when it comes to digital communication within the tech-savvy age, X can still be deemed efficient as a means of social media communication. Nevertheless, several analysts contend that X is better suited for disseminating political topics or contemporary social issues. The reason for this is that X is a platform that has the ability to rapidly distribute information to the general public, prompting numerous political organizations to utilize X in order to enhance civic political communication.

Empowering Bifurcated Discourse in the Digital Citizenship Sphere

Social media has made digital citizenship communication more effective and efficient. Citizens now have the ability to create digital communication systems with anyone, without being restricted by space or time limits. This factor establishes social media as one of the most important platforms for communication in the digital era. Social media has become an increasingly dominant platform for digital citizens to communicate. Social media has led to the emergence of new forms of digital communication, characterized by the formation of interactive communication channels, which is a unique aspect of the communication model influenced by social media. Two-way communication is characterized by reciprocal engagement between the communicator and the communicatee.

During the communication process, individuals involved are given the chance to respond or offer feedback to the person communicating. Nevertheless, the process of two-way communication may appear sluggish as participants have the opportunity to provide input on the content of the message. The meticulous approach is regarded as advantageous since it enhances the recipients' comprehension of the content. Two-way communication is enhanced by frequent interruptions such as facial expressions, inquiries, requests for explanation, and other forms of engagement, making it more dynamic and livelier. Two-way communication can be identified by the active

involvement of social media users who provide comments, ideas, and criticisms on a piece of material. Social media platforms are motivated to innovate by the pattern of interactive contact, leading to the creation of many distinctive features, particularly for facilitating dialogues through messaging columns (messenger) or chat features.

Social media is a major avenue for digital communication among the internet-savvy youth due to its practicality, effectiveness, and efficiency. By utilizing the feature of sending direct messages on Facebook, WhatsApp, or Instagram, where users can establish instant two-way contact. Although communication takes place in the virtual domain, the process closely mirrors interactions in real life. Notwithstanding this, the analyzing and interpretation of textual signals, such as emoticons, are often crucial to the chat communication process. Emoticons, in this particular context, function as symbols or combinations employed to represent facial expressions that transmit diverse emotions or feelings in messaging or written communication [23]. The utilization of these symbols has the consequence of fostering a wide range of interpretations or understandings among the internet generation for each symbol.

Essentially, while digital communication imitates real-life interactions, certain constraints remain, especially due to the potential for different interpretations resulting from the use of symbolic expressions and text-based interactions. However, in general, this digital communication pattern greatly assists the internet generation in communicating during the era of digitalization. Particular areas of this digital communication pattern contribute to the formation of digital culture among the tech-savvy generation. This sentiment is reiterated by the informants in this study. When it comes to friends, family, and other acquittances, the informants emphasize how social media has made contact quick and simple. The ease of utilizing social media dramatically enhances communication, be it through inbox messages, direct messaging, or WhatsApp. According to this study, digital communication on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram bears resemblance to face-to-face conversation, despite the fact that it frequently comprises a greater amount of written text and emotion symbols. Even though these symbols resemble faces, there are often a variety of interpretations and meanings associated with them. Nevertheless, being technologically proficient, they must acclimate to this digital society.

In addition, social media greatly facilitates digital communication for the tech-savvy generation that prefers online buying. Social media functions as an auxiliary or assisting instrument in the process of doing transactions online. This is underlined due to the fact that customers, during digital transactions, actively seek proof that the products and services provided align with their expectations. Consequently, buyers require assurances and ample information regarding the items and services. Social media enables seamless digital contact between customers and enterprises, streamlining their interaction process. Hence, the utilization of social media as a platform for digital communication might influence shifts in perceptions and opinions on a particular business [24]. Customers readily engage in direct interaction, akin to the conventional in-sore buying experience, facilitating a seamless digital communication process. Customers may seek information regarding specific product

specs, offer feedback, suggestions, or file complaints concerning the products they have purchased. The presence of digital communication facilitates a mutually beneficial two-way communication pattern for both enterprises and consumers. According to this study, individuals who frequently participate in online transactions find social media highly advantageous because it allows them to directly communicate with sellers of products. Customers have the option to directly inquire, provide critiques, or register complaints if the acquired products fail to fulfill their expectations. Social media significantly enhances their capacity to engage in digital communication.

For the technologically adept generation, the existence of social media might promote democratic and participative communication patterns, particularly in the context of online conversations. This phenomenon is clearly observable on platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook, which have facilitated the formation of numerous groups centered around common interests and identities. WhatsApp has revolutionized civic behavior, transitioning from in-person conversations to digital exchanges. A plethora of groups, including those founded on political ideas, workplace conversations, family gatherings, alumni associations, and other common interests and identities, have arisen as means of communication. These groups have given rise to several bidirectional digital exchange that resemble traditional conversations. Significantly, online discussions held within WhatsApp groups have resulted in the organizations of seminars and lectures presented via the app. These online seminars and lectures are done as events within WhatsApp groups, involving speakers, participants, and the technical components of execution. They closely resemble traditional seminar activities.

Like in real-world seminars and lecturers, participants are free to interact and ask questions as well as offer their opinions. The dynamic also exists in Facebook groups, which are frequently used by the community to create digital communication norms and is not unique to WhatsApp only. Facebook groups are formed around common ideas, concepts, interests, and political ideologies. Some examples consist of matchmaking communities, school and college alumni associations, sports aficionados, and groups boned by common political ideas. According to this study, the digital communication medium has become popular with the introduction of WhatsApp groups. They no longer face the challenge of locating contacts and communicating with their former classmates as school alumni. Many will respond simply by inquiring among the members of the group. This indicates that social media makes digital communication channels seem more approachable.

Notwithstanding this, the differentiation between online groups established on Facebook and WhatsApp pertains to their respective objectives. The proliferation of Facebook groups founded on thematic, conceptual, and scholastic principles contributes to the platform's generally greater diversity. Conversely, WhatsApp groups are established with the purpose of facilitating digital communication within a community. Thematic groups on Facebook are primarily focused on fostering discussions related to specific themes, subjects, or fields of study that have a digital basis. As a result, this fosters democratic, interactive, and reciprocal forms of digital

conversation and communication regarding the discussed subjects. For instance, the Facebook group "Dunia Komunikasi" (World of Communication) focuses on discussing subjects pertaining to media and communication. Every member of the group has the ability to upload content and offer their comments, complaints, and suggestions regarding the issue. The presence of such groups has a significant influence by generating novel knowledge that is not typically found in traditional conversations. Membership in a Facebook group devoted to discussions within the informants'' area of expertise has been deemed extraordinarily advantageous. The group enhances their comprehension of scholastic subjects by acquiring diverse perspectives. Participants have the ability to promptly seek information on unfamiliar topics. In the event that the administrator is unable to provide an answer, other individuals readily offer assistance in responding to inquiries. On account of the fact that anyone can easily process and transmit information digitally, they perceive the digital communication established within Facebook and WhatsApp groups as being more democratic and participatory. This establishes an environment conducive to the expression of opinions or a democratic model of communication.

In the context of digital communication, it is indisputable that social media are indispensable for the internet-savvy generation that participates in communities based on interests or location. Online communities' groups, such as those found on Facebook or WhatsApp, provide internet-generation users with an avenue for education and learning. Entities and organizations are recognized for utilizing social media to facilitate participatory communication in various regions. The attempt to establish virtual communities focused on cultural knowledge is apparent in the endeavors to do so.

Communication within these groups is centered on a multitude of subjects, including contemporary discourse, the acquisition of novel insights, and the presentation of individual group members' ideas. It is noteworthy that individuals who were previously reluctant to voice their opinions or provide comments frequently discover the digital communication setting within social media groups to be empowering. The group consequently generates an abundance of novel concepts and ideas. Unrestricted by time or space, these discussions are particularly intriguing due to the fact that they transpire within the virtual domain. Constant access to the most recent information is ensured for all members through the ability to engage in online discussions within Facebook and WhatsApp groups. This is consistent with the study results indicating that individuals join community groups on social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp in order to obtain novel perspectives on organizations that pique their interest. A multitude of novel insights, acquaintances, and encounters are obtained through digital contact in the virtual realm.

Therefore, the efficacy of social media as a platform for civic discourse resides in its capacity to enhance reciprocal communication between those expressing opinions and those receiving them. Lecturers and students' exchanges concerning course materials are a prominent illustration of this type of two-way communication. The positive effects of social media's utility, nevertheless, extend well beyond this particular

situation. In light of this, it is critical to improve the social media literacy of the general public, particularly in times of crisis such as Covid-19 pandemic [25].

4   Conclusion

Social media is assuming an increasingly indispensable role and function as a digital platform for civic engagement and communication in the age of digitization. Indonesia's extensive utilization of social media and the internet further emphasizes this point. Social media has become an indispensable tool for the tech-savvy youth, serving multiple purposes. The efficacy of social media as a conduit for digital communication has resulted in the internet generation forming a reliance on these platforms. Social media is employed by individuals not only for political ideological purposes but also for communication with collogues, friends, family, classmates, and communities. The internet generation holds the perception that digital communication via social media is genuine and free from any form of artificiality. Social media-facilitated digital communication has evolved into an essential mode of interaction in the present era. However, the distinction resides in the application of symbols and written languages in the process of communication. The profusion of symbols and text engenders manifold interpretations and significations. Hence, the current generation must acclimate to the digital culture that revolves around symbols and written language.

Moreover, WhatsApp, a private-focused social media network, has gained significant popularity among the younger population as a means of digital communication. WhatsApp has emerged as the predominant platform utilized by tech-savvy generations to establish channels for digital civic communication. As a result, a variety of WhatsApp groups have emerged, including individuals with similar political views, alumni associations, campus communities, and ethnic-based groupings. A similar pattern may be seen in the usage of public-focused social media sites such as Facebook. Facebook is widely utilized as a platform for digital civic communication. The advantages of digital communication on Facebook are evident in the establishment of several discussion groups. Nevertheless, Facebook groups exhibit minor distinctions compared to WhatsApp groups. Facebook groups are created based on shared interests, philosophies, and theme issues relating to knowledge and expertise. An example of this is the Facebook community "Dunia Komunikasi" (World of Communication), which is dedicated to facilitating in-depth academic conversations for individuals interested in media and communication studies.

Diverse phenomena have consequently arisen, providing additional evidence that the implementation of social media for digital civic communication has generated an array of communication patterns. This is seen in the enhancement of bilateral communication patterns facilitated by the existence of social media. Within the framework of the two-way communication pattern, exchanges assume a more democratic, interactive, and participatory nature. Social media users are therefore liberated to express a variety of thoughts and ideas. This indicates that through

interactive digital communication, users can autonomously construct conceptual and ideational frameworks. The influence entails the generations of several discussions and the widespread sharing of information within the public domain, all stemming from digital communication via social media. Social media can ultimately facilitate a democratic, interactive, and participatory pattern of two-way communication. This study has discovered that social media plays a crucial function as a major function as a major instrument for digital civic communication.

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