

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION: DIGITAL DEMOCRACY OF NETIZENS

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Abstract:

Unknowingly, nowadays many people have entered or been involved in political communication. Political communication is also considered important and interesting along with the development of the mass media. Issues that are present as material for information or messages in political communication have now attracted the attention of the general public as well as in participation in democracy. The era of information society does not only bring new human values, but also the formulation of a new level of democracy. Digital democracy has become the leading system in the political, social, economic and cultural systems of the information society. With digital media, netizens can use digital media to gather support. By conveying their rational arguments in digital media, they can convince other elements of democracy to agree with their opinion.

Keywords: Digital Democracy, Netizens Political Communications

A. POTICAL COMMUNICATION

Political communication is a branch of communication that is quite popular. Unknowingly, nowadays many people have entered or been involved in political communication. Political communication is also considered important and interesting along with the development of the mass media. Issues present as material for information or messages in political communication have now attracted the attention of the general public. In general, political communication can be interpreted as a communication process in which there are political messages (Wahid, 2012). Political communication is a result that has a political nature, if the emphasis is on results. Meanwhile, if political communication is defined by emphasizing functions in the political system, it is communication that occurs within a political system and occurs between the system and its environment. In political communication, there are several actors or political figures who are involved as communicators or as communicants, besides political messages, political media has something to do with the goals of politics itself, namely power. Political communication is the activity of every symbol or message exchange and most of it has been formed by actors who have a role in the communication, political communication also has consequences for the political system.

The message of political communication that the communicator or communicant wants to convey does not have to be large-scale or have a deep message (Susanto, 2013). For example, when someone comments on a head of state figure, provides support, comments on government policies and others, it can be categorized as a process of political communication. Political communication according to experts is broadly defined as communication that involves political messages and political actors, political communication is also related to power, government and government policies. Even though it sounds like it has formal discussion or messages, in practice political communication is closely related to political activities. every day and there is not a single human being who is not involved in political communication or communication itself. Not infrequently, people do not realize that they have been trapped in the analysis and study of political communication. The term political science is the study of politics or politics or politics.

To achieve a better life, this goal can only be achieved by having power over an area, so many argue that political science is the study of power, although basically political science is the science of achieving a better order of life. According to political science is the science that studies the State and how the State performs its duties and functions. Meanwhile, politics as a public matter, as Aristotle said, that humans are basically animals who are political means that only in a political society can humans live a good life. Politics can be interpreted as an ethical activity related to efforts to create a just society or what is called the basic science of government. The traditional distinction between the public sphere and the private sphere is in accordance with the division between the state and civil society. State institutions (government agencies, courts, police, army, social security systems, and so on) can be considered as public in

the sense that they are responsible for regulating people's lives with public spending. In contrast to civil society which consists of families, private or private companies, trade unions, community groups and others are private because they are formed and financed personally. Politics as conflict and consensus, it can be understood that politics is a way to solve conflicts namely by compromise, peace and negotiation, rather than through violence or by using weapons. One of the supporters of this view is (Ardianto et al., 2020) says that politics is an activity in which different interests in a particular government unit are reconciled by giving them a share in power in proportion to their role in welfare and survival whole society.

This is where the role of political parties as political communication. In carrying out this function, political parties are often known as intermediaries between the public and the government. After accommodating the aspirations of the people, to prevent clashes and confusion, political parties combine and formulate them into policy proposals. To find out more about political communication, it is better to know in advance about the meaning of political communication itself. Political communication is communication that involves political messages and political actors, or is related to power, government, and government policy. With this understanding, as an applied science, political communication is nothing new. Political communication can also be understood as communication between "those who rule" and "those who are ruled". (Guichet et al., 2022) In simple terms, political communication is communication that involves political messages and political actors, or is related to power government and government policy. Bearing in mind that communication is inherent in everyone as, according to humans, they are creatures that cannot but communicate, then every human behavior, including when they are silent, and when they do not respond to political messages from one source, still creates meanings related to political nuances. In relation to the life of the nation and state, that political communication is the process of conveying opinions, attitudes and behavior of people, institutions or political forces in order to influence political decisions, while what is meant by politics is none other than the life of the state. Flexibly political communication is communication that refers to political activities. Thus all activities with political nuances, which are carried out by the government, or state power and its supporting institutions as well as those carried out by the people in general, are a form of political communication. (Academy & Press, 2017) Political communication consists of various elements, including: (a) Political communicators are those who can provide information about matters that have political meaning. for example presidents, ministers, members of parliament, politicians, and pressure groups in society that can influence the running of government. (b) Political messages are statements that are conveyed, either in writing or in writing, both verbally and non-verbally, hidden or openly, both consciously and unconsciously, the contents of which contain politics. For example political speeches, political statements, books, brochures and newspaper news about politics, and others. (c). Political media is a tool or means used by communicators in conveying political messages. For example print media, electronic media, online media, outreach, group communication by parties, community organizations and so on. (d). Target Politics are members of the public who are expected to provide support in the form of voting to parties or candidates in the general election. They are businessmen, civil servants, workers, youth, women, students, and the like. (e) The expected effect of political communication is the creation of an understanding of the system of government and political parties, the activeness of the people in political participation, which will later have an impact on

voting in the General Election.

B. DIGITAL DEMOCRACY

Digital democracy is a revolution, this concept offers a breakthrough that was not found in previous democracies. Digital democracy raises new challenges to traditional or conventional democratic practices. Especially for the state and government. They are demanded to be responsive with the new face of this future democracy. A more comprehensive concept of digital democracy has begun to attract the interest of many parties. The question of how the theoretical concept and practice of democracy begins to be studied in depth. This is part of the preparation for welcoming this democratic application. To find out what its strengths and weaknesses are. (Ras Amanda Gelgel, 2022) And the most important thing is to know the ability of digital democracy to overcome problems that have so far been faced by conventional democracy. Can the presence of digital democracy overcome the low level of citizen participation? Can it strengthen democratic practices in countries that have already implemented it? Can digital democracy spur the spirit of an undemocratic country to fight for its democracy?

The era of information society does not only bring new human values, but also the formulation of a new level of democracy. Digital democracy has become a leading system in the political, social, economic and cultural systems of the information society. Digital democracy is a framework within which the information society can function optimally. Digital democracy presents a higher level than liberal democracy. Digital democracy adds to the acceleration and productivity of liberal democracy. Digital democracy is a symbiosis of democracy with electronic technology. Digital democracy weaves interactions between the public, political parties, government, business people, local communities, and social networks. As a new ICT application, digital democracy was born as a result of "dialectical interaction between technology and society". nation-states into global and local identities.

Then, what is digital democracy? There are several global definitions. Hacker and Dijk define digital democracy as "an effort to implement the concept of democracy without being constrained by time, space, and other physical conditions. So, the practice of digital democracy transcends the barriers of time, space, and anything that limits them physically. The tools used to transcend the boundaries of time and space are digital technologies, not analog devices commonly used in conventional democracies. Digital democracy is the practice of democracy using online and offline digital media. Digital devices are used in part or in whole of these democratic practices. However, it is not solely online, because within certain limits and certain aspects take place in the online realm through face-to-face activities.

Broader definition of digital democracy: "Digital democracy could be defined as any electronic exchange in the democratic process, both from the citizens' perspective and from the one of the politicians' and the political system's. it reflects, in this particular ambit, the tendency towards substituting physical participation to politically significant events by using electronic communication means. As well as online voting and voter registration and electoral rolls, digital democracy includes various forms of what could be called "e-participation": opinion polling, campaigning and voters, internet political chat rooms, wired legislative bodies, feed back from the public on legislature drafts etc. apart from governments, political parties and politicians, there are also NGOs, civil society groups, academic institutions, other organizations and individual

citizens who are engaging in e-democracy initiatives, within the broader arena of political marketing. There is no doubt, though, that most initiatives come from relevant sectors of the industry that are interested in more sales of their products.” (Erdmann et al., 2023)

Digital democracy combines the concepts of representative democracy and participatory democracy, with an emphasis on the use of digital technology tools. Digital democracy “explores rapidly the interaction between virtual and social worlds”. Digital democracy is a phenomenon about how the development of digital technology influences democratic practices and political processes. Digital technology plays an important role in strengthening democracy masked in social networks.

Many people believe that digital technology can accelerate technological development and facilitate the “jump” of democratization. Digital democracy offers changes to the order of human life. Digital democracy is a new variety of democracy. This new democratic model offers a level of interactivity that has never been achieved by conventional democratic models. Supporters of digital democracy are optimistic that digital technology makes it possible for a person to break through existing time and space barriers, to then build a broad communication network at the global level. Because of its nature that offers abundant information from various sources, digital democracy is considered to be able to cure the "disease" of conventional democracy that has been applied so far. Especially about the low enthusiasm for political participation. However, not all parties agree with this view. There are those who are not so sure about the ability of digital democracy to encourage public political participation. For this group, participation is a matter of inherent human aspects (motivation). This Wikaya cannot be intervened by technology, no matter how sophisticated it is (Agrawal et al., 2023).

Studies on digital democracy have been rife in recent years, the focus of studies on the theoretical and practical sides. To what extent is this concept realistic to implement. Because the response they faced was not light, namely protection of the basic rights of every individual. So far, at least three arguments have been put forward to confirm the importance and good prospects of digital democracy: First, that digital democracy is able to enhance public efforts to achieve political information and information exchange. A very important practice in information systems.

(Xiao et al., 2023) Strengthening citizens' political awareness occurs when they actively search for political information. Second, digital democracy encourages public debate, deliberations and the formation of communities. The availability of digital devices has spurred ongoing political debate at the public level. Digital technology also promotes the strengthening of a culture of deliberation and community building. Third, democracy increases citizens' political participation. With the help of digital technology that is easy, inexpensive, and efficient. Citizens are motivated to participate in politics. These three reasons are more than enough to conclude that digital democracy has a positive value for the development of democracy. Strengthen democratic practices and improve their quality. In Digital Democracy and the New Age of Reason, David Winston writes that there are four elements of digital technology that are compatible with democracy (www.web.mit.edu). These four elements then make digital democracy relevant to the prospects for democratic practices in the future. (Li & Cesar, 2023) First, digital-based communication supplies information content that is able to

empower each individual so that they are no longer dependent on elites. Individuals are truly made to be autonomous. Each individual can access the information he needs and then share it with others. Digital systems provide specific individual-based information content. For example, detailed information is available based on gender, hobbies, skin color, education, economic category, and so on. With a new information system like this, everyone can establish communication and interaction as needed.

Second, digital systems have very high information and communication speeds. The digital world is very dynamic. Users are also required to be dynamic. Otherwise, it will be left behind. According to Winston, not all parties can adapt to this, so they will be crushed by digital trends. For example, the media is required to be able to work faster in presenting news. There are no more deadlines, like conventional media. In digital media, everything is presented quickly and in a timely manner. Chase with time. Media CNN, MSNBC, and other media will be aware of this fact. Third, digital communication is "asynchronous". The political world and the media world will find it difficult to adapt to this change. With the increasing speed of communication, voters demand political information very quickly and accurately according to their individual needs. In the era of digital democracy, individual convenience will become an integral part of political conversation. (Kamelia & Nusa, 2018). Fourth, it is increasingly difficult to exercise control, hegemony or domination of information. The digital system arena is spread to all points. An information can come from various sources with various versions. Also can spread to various points. So, it is not easy to create a story that creates an "explosive" effect at the media level. It takes great effort. This is different from conventional media where the "explosion" of news" is very much determined by the big media and media owners.

C. DIGITAL DEMOCRACY PHILOSOPHY

The Internet inspires grand visions of a more democratic future. Both at the country level and for a more harmonious global society. This vision expresses the hope that information technology will join forces with history towards greater universal enlightenment. Or in another language, it can cure various diseases of democracy today. The combination of democracy and the internet has become the main object of discussion in legal scholarship, which according to Saco is divided into six categories: First, the democratic management of the internet. The internet must be managed democratically, there must be no denomination (Budiana, 2022).

As a tool of democracy, the internet must be democratic in itself. Don't be anti-democratic. Second, the threat of the internet to national sovereignty, the character of the internet that penetrates borders raises concerns about the national sovereignty of a country. Does the internet threaten national sovereignty or not? This is what is widely discussed. If it threatens, of course there will be a lot of rejection on the internet. Third, the capacity of the internet to augment, change, or suppress current democratic political practices. To what extent can the internet encourage the strengthening of the internet in a country? If projected as an instrument of democracy, the internet must have strong power to democratize a country. Fourth, the capacity of certain internet policies to enhance or suppress democratic values, such as freedom of expression and privacy. Not all parties are happy with the arrival of the digital era. Some feel threatened. Especially the antidecratation regime. The Internet threatens the stability of his tyrannical empire. Because the internet can move people to demand democracy. (Karini, 2023) Because of this,

several countries are trying to hinder the entry of the internet into their countries. Everything is deployed so that the people do not "consume" the internet. The question is: to what extent can obstacles like this be overcome. Because of that, several countries are trying to prevent things like this from being resolved. If the obstacles from the tyrants run smoothly, the internet democracy project will definitely be hampered. Because there will be many regimes that prohibit the use of the internet. This point is related to the fifth point: Criticism of internet policies is carried out by non-democratic countries. Sixth, the dangers of certain internet technologies for democratic practices or values. Besides fostering democracy, certain internet technologies have a negative impact on democracy.

For example, a digital-based intelligence system that can terrorize people. The most obvious example is the use of the internet by terrorists. They are aware of the effectiveness of the internet. Their terror network is also spread via the internet to create a traumatic effect on global society. This step was taken by the Iraqi Syria Islamic State terrorist group (ISIS) or what is known in Indonesia as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). ISIS uses the internet to carry out all its terror acts. Recruitment of members is also carried out by ISIS via the internet. This is the negative of the internet which actually threatens democracy. For Saco, physical space and social space shape democracy both online and offline. Political philosophers since Aristotle have tended to think that direct democracy is only possible in small-scale societies. Overcrowding is a problem for democracy, because a widely dispersed population generally lacks the resources to cohere as a coherent group. As a result, the scale and density have an impact on the manner and quality of each citizen's political participation. All these problems are resolved with the internet. (Mahalingham et al., 2023) In cyberspace, there is no longer a problem of long distances, population density, anything about long time. In the hands of the internet, these three problems have been completely resolved. If cyberspace is a suitable social space for the practice of democracy, what actual impact does the internet actually have on these spatial issues? Space is also a problem for liberalism, in so far as liberalism's central organizing division between things socially constructed as public and things socially constructed as private can be mapped to related concepts of public and private space. As a result of the tension between liberalism's concern for the rights and dignity of the individual and its concern for protecting private choices, liberal political activity often centers on the ongoing construction and reconstruction of the boundaries between the public and private spheres. Many basic sociospatial practices of liberal democracy are challenged by cyberspace, such as matters of private property, national boundaries, authority over individual bodies (Ras Amanda Gelgel, 2022).

Liberalism must overcome all those problems when it goes into cyberspace. Because in cyberspace, for example, national boundaries can "disappear", private property rights are acquired by the public. These challenges have manifested themselves in legal meetings. The law of online trading in intellectual property, intruded houses with spam, viruses and disgusting images. If liberalism wants to use the concept of digital democracy, solutions to these problems must be found first. If not, the potential to cause chaos. The project of unraveling the special dimensions of democracy in cyberspace requires exploring a range of issues.

(Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013) Among these is the potential of cyberspace for political discussion and for augmenting existing ones. Saco developed a theory of democracy in cyberspace. In this effort, Saco starts from the basic point, by exploring "democracy" and "cyberspace" as fundamental special concepts. He provides a basis for starting an analysis of the

work of law involved in “cybering democracy” and also of the effect of the internet on offline democracy theories, especially by extending the theory of democratic participation.

C. FOUR DIGITAL DEMOCRACY SECTORS

Apart from Saco, another academic who is also involved in digital democracy studies is named Lincoln Dahlberg. His book *Re-Constructing Digital Democracy: An Outline of Four “Positions”* (2011). He tries to construct a conception of digital democracy, for Dahlberg, digital democracy has a very important position, answering the needs of future democratic formulations. An era in which all life and state systems have been digitized. This order is not acceptable. Democracy is required to adapt to this new horizon of information and communication systems. The available digital tools must be democratic in order to strengthen democratic systems and practices. So that democracy is getting stronger in conception and more perfect in practice. Dahlberg then describes the position of digital democracy in political practice as liberal individualist, deliberative, counter public, and autonomist Marxist. In these four sectors, digital democracy plays a very important role, its position is very beneficial. Liberal individualism, according to Dahlberg, digital democracy opens opportunities for every individual to realize their interests through the available liberal political system.

Digital devices offer all the conveniences for this by extending various information and communication channels to every information and communication channel for every citizen to be used to realize their political aspirations, digital democracy connects voters and their representatives in their government or parliament. Digital devices facilitate the process of communication and interaction between the two. This was not obtained by residents in the pre-digital era. Moreover, the government itself has the awareness to use digital devices as a means of absorbing aspirations, appreciating protests, and a means of aggregating interests from the grassroots level. Deliberative, in Dahlberg's view, is related to deliberatively constituted consensus. Previously, the collective agreement of all elements of citizenship went through a dialectical process. The mechanism used is dialogue, all aspirations and opinions are accommodated and a middle way is sought. So that a rationality of public opinion is achieved which is nothing but a mutual agreement. Digital devices can facilitate this process. This is the phenomenon of digital democracy.

Democratic practices that take place facilitated by digital technology. Dialogue in public spaces occurs using digital technology. Social media, websites, and various other digital technologies are the means for the public to express their opinions. All of these opinions then enter the digital “vessel”. Then “processed” through the mechanism of dialogue. And the climax produces a “cuisine” in the form of a consensus with the public. In the previous era, it was no longer easy for someone to express their opinion. He had to go through a complicated bureaucratic system. If you don't want to go through the bureaucratic route, the last alternative is to use the mouthpiece of the mass media. The problem: it is not easy to find mass media that are willing to accommodate public opinion. What else is only individual. Even if you want it, it's not cheap. All these difficulties were overcome by the creation of digital technology. Each individual has a medium in his hands. For free he can convey his opinion. He can use it anytime and anywhere to convey his opinion. He no longer needs to come to the bureaucracy nor does he need to use the mass media. Simply by maximizing the social media he has, he can already send his opinion to the government and to the public in general. The government can read it and then

respond. If the government's response is not as expected, it is not impossible to build public solidarity to defend that individual.

According to Dahlberg, digital media is an effective means of countering what is done by the public. Public counter is a phenomenon of fringe voices who oppose a particular decision or policy. Digital technology is a god of help for groups that have had difficulty voicing their aspirations and opinions because mainstream media has been controlled by the power of capital. With digital media they are out of this predicament. They can use digital media to gather support. By conveying their rational arguments in digital media, they can convince other elements of democracy to agree with their opinion. When a consensus of opinion is built, a movement can be made to make it happen. Raising opinion from marginal streams like this can only be done when digital media was born before this was difficult to do, they were marginalized by the hegemonic and dominatic forces of the mass media. Digital media has great benefits in strengthening alternative and marginalized voices in the arena of power contestation and discourse formation.

One of the advantages of digital communication is its ability to form a broad network. An integrated technology system between all media lines facilitates the process of forming networks between lines in the conventional era, new networks can be formed through a long process and difficult efforts. There are many challenges that must be overcome. These obstacles are almost non-existent in the digital world. Synergy between networks is actually an advantage offered by digital media. Building a network is very easy. It is this advantage that is greatly assisted in the practice of democracy. The era of digital democracy is filled with links to various activism networks according to politics by utilizing digital devices as democratization elements to build communication of various information and interact with each other to close ranks. When responding to an issue using digital media, they also prepare a socio-political movement to respond to the issue. Even the processes of consensus, consolidation, and per action can be prepared through digital media. Thus, digital media has created a new tool for efforts to revitalize network-based democratic activism. Those are the four political sectors which, according to Dahlberg's analysis, characterize the era of digital democracy. It can be concluded that digital democracy will further enliven the spirit of democratization. The practice of democracy gets new energy with the arrival of the digital era. The continued decline in the level of political participation, which some people fear will lead to a weakening of the pillars of democracy, has been helped by the presence of the digital era.

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CONCLUSION

Communication politics is a crucial aspect of public communication, involving the exchange of information and ideas between individuals and organizations. It is a process that involves the exchange of ideas and opinions between individuals and organizations. In the context of communication politics, there are various actors involved in the process, such as the media, politicians, and the public. These actors must be aware of the importance of communication in their respective systems and work towards achieving a better quality of life for the people. In conclusion, communication politics is a vital aspect of public life, involving the exchange of ideas and opinions between individuals and organizations. It is essential for the government to be transparent and accountable in its actions and decisions, ensuring that the public's interests are protected and that the interests of the public are respected. The internet has a significant impact on global democracy, with its potential to bring about greater harmony and equality. It has the potential to promote democracy and promote a just and just society. However, the internet has also been accused of promoting anti-democracy and causing harm to the nation. The internet has the potential to undermine democracy and promote anti-democracy. It can be used to undermine national institutions and institutions, such as the press and the media. It can also be used to spread terror and terrorism, which can have a devastating effect on the global community. The internet has the potential to create a sense of freedom and equality, as it allows people to participate in the political process and participate in the decision-making process. However, the internet also has the potential to create a sense of hegemony and a sense of power, which can be used to undermine democracy and promote hegemony. In conclusion, the internet has the potential to promote democracy and promote a just and just society. However, it also has the potential to create a sense of hegemony and power imbalances, leading to potential conflicts and conflicts between the public and private sectors.

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