Political ethics in Indonesia: A study of political ethics of digital citizenship in the 2024 election

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Article Info

Abstract

This article focused on examining the political ethics of digital citizenship in Indonesia in the digital era at a time of technological and scientific progress, specifically in the context of the 2024 election. Changes supported by advances in information technology have also shaped the political character of each individual in the digital era. There are many negative as well as positive things that arise, making it an interesting discourse to research. This descriptive qualitative research explored data through in-depth interviews and reviewing literature sourced from books and articles and analyzed the content and conversations of digital citizens on social media Instagram ahead of the 2024 elections. The research results showed a shift in the political ethics of Indonesian citizens in the digital realm towards a better direction. Even though there was still a lot of conflict, disputes, commotion in the digital world in the 2024 election. Sharp discourse in the digital world in the 2024 Election, which was accompanied by data-based campaigns, was in line with the concept of worldly ethics initiated by Hannah Arendt. This concept can also be a solution to overcome the negative side of digital politics, including in the 2024 elections. Moreover, the existing dynamics of digital politics were based on non-primordial political ethics, that is, they are not accompanied by narratives of identity politics among citizens.

INTRODUCTION

The digital generation was formed along with very rapid technological advances in the last two decades. Technological advances followed by the development of information and communication systems offer many conveniences for people to use in daily life. In the context of digital technology, it can be seen that the dissemination of news is no longer only through print media, but is starting to be shifted by the use of electronic media in various fields and aspects of daily life. The internet is no longer something new to society so it is used by its users for various purposes.

Social construction has changed, following technological developments that have given birth to the digital era. Citizens' lifestyles are becoming completely digital and exposing them to the era of open information. This is a condition characterized by advances in technology, information and communication that have ushered every citizen into an era of open information and resulted in changes in human lifestyles not only locally, but also internationally (Feriansyah, M. Iqbal, 2019). The digital era is described as a time when humans are technologically literate. Everything has become so connected. Innovation and revolution in human life can be born simply by playing with your fingers. So, digital citizens are identified with 9 (nine) things that form the construction of a digital society according to (Ribble, Mike S dan Bailey, 2007), namely digital access, digital commerce, digital communication, digital literacy, digital ethics, digital law, citizens' rights and obligations. digital nation, digital health and fitness, and digital security (Lu, 2023).

Society has interaction patterns that are greatly influenced by the existence of information and communication technology networks. Digital information is really needed by society, growing online communities which later become popular internet applications (Zheng & Cao, 2011). Online communities, according to Zhou, consist of members sharing common interests. They interact with each other to discuss topics, exchange ideas, and seek support. Everyone is connected to one another and most people look for information to reduce the uncertainty and lack of clarity they feel (Lyndon et al., 2015). In the digital era, each person not only fulfills their information needs, but each individual also becomes an information processor (Tomohardjo et al., 2019). This means that every individual digital citizen must inevitably be prepared with the knowledge and skills to face every change in the digital world.

At the beginning of the digital era, (Cogan, 1998) explained eight characteristics which are characteristics of certain skills and competencies in citizens living in the 21st century. These characteristics are needed to overcome and manage undesirable symptoms in the development of global society. The one from characteristics is The willingness and ability to participate in politics at local, national, and international levels.

These eight characters describe the ideal figure as a digital citizen, an effort to form an intelligent citizen (an informed citizenry), a citizen who is able to think analytically (analytical citizenry), and a citizen who is committed and able to involve himself (a committed and involved citizenry) (Wahab, 2011). Communication ethics is important for individuals in the digital world (Apdillah et al., 2022), becoming a form of awareness for the global community about the importance of openly practicing positive attitudes that give the impression of kindness to others (Peng, 2023). Ideal values are expected to emerge in digital society, so that they become a guide for digital citizens in all areas of their lives. Digital citizenship is defined as individuals' awareness of being responsible for their actions and behavior in cyberspace, including their activities in educational, social and political life (Elmali et al., 2020).

Digitalization in society has so far brought changes to society in politics and changed the definition and patterns of human action. Internet penetration provides a way for the emergence of forms of individual participation and action in society, especially in the political field. Political interactions in society are also undergoing construction. As described by (Jennings, 2006), media is a way of seeing reality, regarding how subjects are represented and through representational practices which give rise to a system of thinking about individual values (Rianto, 2019). Media in the digital space has influenced the basic social and political practices of human life.

Media often influences individuals in viewing the reality around them, including in viewing themselves. As a result, more groups and communities are sorting and affiliating digital citizens due to differences in views. Furthermore, one of the characteristics is a group, this community is not limited only by territory, but also appears to be divided due to politics, ideology, goals, shared opinions, and so on. Like urbanization, the digital division of society is very clearly visible in the political realm in Indonesia. Political polarization occurs and is massive. In fact, people's political choices can be read, especially when tracing the media choices, they follow and digital groups that are often "liked" by each community member.

In fact, in the current development where digital media has been controlled by most elements of society, the existence of this media has not only influenced changes in society which is only a recipient, but has also spread by acting as a mediator or messenger. In fact, their existence is the omnipresence and internal logic of the individual (Ushuluddin & Furqon, 2019). It was at this point where problems emerged and contributed to prolonged political unrest. Due to the power given by the word democracy, everyone feels they have the right and freedom to be a messenger in the digital space. Virtual political activities become digital political literacy which is important for common concern, organized according to political ethics.

Innovation, change, beauty, goodness, truth and scientific progress can be obtained and achieved in the digital era. As stated by (Yenny, 2021) quoted in kompas.com. that the convenience of digital platforms includes being a cultural link between different communities, being a means of reducing inequality, facilitating emergency humanitarian action, being a tool to streamline public services, and being a risk mitigation tool. However, on the one hand, negative things can happen as a result of digital life. Setbacks in several cases, chaos, ugliness, misunderstandings and conflicts are the potential that can occur at any time. As time goes by, especially in the last two decades, various problems have emerged and are often uncontrollable in digital society. There is conflict on social media in the political and social fields that is widespread in society, grouping people into various parties that are facing each other. It even causes division and disintegration of the nation. You can see the experience of the Indonesian nation when there was a political conflict on social media between two camps that supported each other's political choices in the 2014 and 2019 Presidential Elections, and which may occur in the upcoming 2024 General Election. This is made worse by problems that arise such as cybercrime and cyber bullying.

Social media is recognized as an important part of the very fast dissemination of information, with the largest number of social media users in the country coming from the age group of 20-29 years (millennial generation). As many as 93.5% of the millennial generation group have social media accounts. Moreover, social media users are almost evenly distributed across every age group. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Line, and currently on the rise Tik Tok have become a means of connecting which is also used as a source of conflict because it is now very effective as a campaign tool. Digital politics (politics in cyberspace) takes advantage of opportunities from existing technology, with a role in political life, namely how a political figure can carry out good and appropriate political communications to the public. There are social media sites that can help someone create a profile and then connect with other users. One and another can spread positive or negative information.

Facing the potential and the threats of the digital world, society must also have sensitivity and intelligence as digital citizens, in this case as well as digital citizens. The digital citizen ideally described by Cogan at the beginning of world society entered the modern era described above. Various efforts need to be made aimed at educating citizens so that they can contribute positively in the digital era, one of which is through citizen ethics and politics. This research was conducted to explore the answer to the question; How are the political ethics of digital citizens in Indonesia facing the 2024 elections? What values based on local wisdom can every Indonesian individual control in digital ethics in the 2024 Election?

METHOD

This research aimed to explore the political ethics of digital citizenship in Indonesia ahead of the 2024 elections, and the urgency of local wisdom as a control for each individual in digital ethics. The study was carried out by using a qualitative descriptive approach. In-depth interviews, literature studies sourced from books and articles, as well as analyzing the content and conversations of digital citizens on social media Instagram and Facebook ahead of the 2024 elections, were the sources of research data. Data was collected in depth about the political ethics of digital citizenship based on experience and thinking perspectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through interviews and document searches on social media online, data was obtained about phenomena that occurred on digital media before the 2024 election, with some content produced by individuals with various political motives and interests. Forms of expression, writing and images that become content on social media by social media users ahead of the 2024 Election, include; campaign and support for a favored candidate accompanied by rationalization of support; attacks on one of the candidates accompanied by convincing arguments to the public; the optimistic attitude of social media users towards the election results, and conversely the pessimistic attitude towards the current political system and the results of the 2024 election. The expressions in social media by digital citizens above can be seen on the Facebook and Instagram platforms.

The data of political ethics of digital citizens in Indonesia facing the 2024 elections showed that there was still the use of impolite language, language that put down other social media users who had different choices, and there were still many "brutal" attacks on individual social media users. The lack of individual responsibility for using social media in the 2024 Election was of course related to social responsibility, so self-control was needed by each individual. In the 2024 Election, digital society in Indonesia still used impolite language, had a negative perspective, and was still not selective in responding to news, unclear contents. Bullying in the form of hate speech and cyber harassment still occurred frequently and attacked everyone, from children to adults, from ordinary citizens to heads of state. The visual anonymity obtained by digital citizens made them feel free, entitled to comment cruelly on other parties, and had no respect for other people.

In its development, the word ethics is differentiated from morality, where the word morality is always associated with norms that regulate human behavior in general because they are universal and transcendent, and deal with universal and absolute habits, values, norms (Koten, 2016). Meanwhile, ethics is an evaluation of the concrete conditions of human life to reveal what happens to the individual and make his life better in the world. This means that ethics, according to this view, depends entirely on the particular conditions of an individual in the world, namely on how his relations are in the world, his relations with other people, which depend on his will. In the context of the ethics of digital citizens in this article, it would be interesting if Hannah Arendt's theory regarding worldly ethics becomes an analytical knife for dissection and becomes a guide for the direction of discussion (Lustanto & Kartika, 2019).

Arendt emphasized that every event always has meaning, always has a certain value according to human reason, even if it is a crime. Then according to Arendt, intersubjectivity is another fundamental important thing. There is no single thought or idea that can fully capture the essence of an object in the world. In reality, the world opens up differently to each person according to their position in the world. Because the world opens itself to a plurality of people, each individual has a distinctive or unique perspective on it. Arendt believed that there is something common in the world that encourages everyone to have a perspective on it (Koten, 2016). The implication then, according to him, is that the same world opens itself to everyone, therefore a reciprocal relationship occurs between the natural qualities of humans and the surrounding reality.

The ethical context of digital citizenship is based on the rights and obligations of each individual who is bound by the provisions of their "world", which in the context of this article, is the state. Why are the ethics of Indonesian citizens in

the digital era or often referred to as digital citizenship important? One answer is that the number of users and beneficiaries of digitalization in Indonesia is very high in quantity. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency in 2019, the number of internet users reached 47.69% of the Indonesian population aged over 5 years, or around 115 million people. Meanwhile, according to the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), internet user penetration was estimated to reach 64.8% of the Indonesian population or around 171.17 million people (Usman et al., 2021).

Citizens must maintain ethics in today's digital world. Several principles are proposed as discussion discourse in this paper; is; The first thing every citizen must understand in maintaining ethics as a digital citizen is obeying all legal rules established to regulate digital life (digital law). In Indonesia, several laws have been enacted, namely Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE), the provisions of which have been amended in Law Number 19 of 2016 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (UU ITE), and Law Number 3 of 2011 concerning Fund Transfers. It is hoped that order and security will be achieved by the community, according to the informant's hopes, so that cybercrime can be minimized. In current developments, there are also legal provisions that have not yet been established, for example protection for the use of citizens' personal data which is currently still not protected. The discourse on ratifying the Personal Data Protection (RUU PDP) has indeed spread and is pressing for it to be passed into law, coupled with issues circulating in society at the beginning of 2021 regarding personal data of members of the public being leaked and controlled by irresponsible parties. Because legal regulations do not yet exist, this problem is very narrow to be caught up in the applicable legal provisions.

Second, the humanitarian ethic that digital citizens must have, namely the importance of caring for each other, understanding every event, every problem, in the context of humanism. Every individual digital citizen is responsible for what happens in the digital world. The commotion that often occurs in online relationships in digital society

often occurs, especially on social media. On the one hand, social media offers various conveniences for its users to access and share information quickly, easily and cheaply. However, on the other hand, when the use of social media grows wilder and goes beyond the bounds of civility, the risk that occurs is the emergence of unrest, acts of mutual bullying, and even giving rise to manifest conflicts in society. You can imagine what happens when people can easily upload various hate speech, hoax news and provocative information without being able to prevent it.

The responsibility recommended by Arendt is awareness of caring for each other and caring for the world, in this case the conditions and situations of the digital world where individuals live and interact. Everyone must have an awareness of collectivity in the digital world, even though they are physically alone and directly connected to other people. Every individual must not be selfish, be upright and feel right about his perceptions. Without thinking that involves other people in dialogue, collective action is impossible, the impact is there will be no attention or concern in the world. In this process, an individual will try to understand various differences, try to see other people's views that are different from his opinion, so that he will try to understand the world and show more attention, understanding, and tolerance. Arendt wrote; "For the world is not humane just because it is made by human beings, and it does not become humane just because the human voice sounds in it, but only when it has become the object of discourse... We humanize what is going on in the world and in ourselves only by speaking of it, and in the course of speaking of it we learn to be human".

Responsibility in digital citizen ethics as described above results in several choices of digital behavior for Indonesian citizens, namely;

1. Receiving, understanding, considering and checking the veracity of information, news and others) on social media, and then deciding to share it or not.
2. Responding logically to other people's opinions. Next, trying to assess, seeing from their perspective when differences occur, followed by accurate data.

3. Avoiding thinking that being different is being opposite, being an enemy worthy of attack. Such thinking has the potential to cause conflict and hostility that cannot be avoided in the digital world.

4. Awareness as part of a digital community, which must contribute positively to the digital world. This directs, controls each individual not to do negative things, such as; writing bullying sentences, hate speech towards other people/groups on social media, degrading the dignity of other people or groups, and other things that are provocative and cause vertical and horizontal conflict. This includes creating digital content that is useful in people's lives, providing solutions to social problems, reducing the occurrence of social pathology, and so on.

5. Upholding the values of Pancasila, especially Indonesian unity in the digital world.

Digital individual characters are often depicted as short-axis figures, not intelligently accepting other people's opinions. In fact, what must be done is to try to assess, see from their perspective when differences occur, followed by accurate data. Fake information and news or better known as "hoaxes" by a number of irresponsible individuals are often created for certain purposes. If you are not careful, netizens will easily fall for these hoaxes and even spread false information, which will of course be very detrimental to the victims of slander. So how do you avoid being provoked? The Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Information (2021) provides guidance to citizens in the digital era, namely by; (1) being careful with provocative titles, (2) paying attention to site addresses, (3) checking facts, (4) checking the authenticity of photos on social media, (5) looking for trusted sources.

When explaining the third ethical responsibility above, by looking at the current phenomenon, where conflict and hostility are unavoidable in the digital world. Social media always updates a problem of social, political, health, security, religious and so on problems that occur in society. Everyone is free to express opinions without restrictions along with the ease of access they get. Thus, all levels of society can freely access whatever they want. Furthermore, people tend to respond to information from their own perspective,

which has an impact on the number of opinions expressed according to their respective perspectives. Often when there are differences in perspective and clashes between digital citizens, a person will go in two directions, namely he will tend to be closed and conversely, he will be open. Ideally, in digital citizenship ethics, digital media should be used as a medium to develop individual thinking and a place for individuals to see the issues being discussed from various angles. The perspective, present in each person, causes a relationship of personal thought on the issues discussed, so that it becomes a forum and democratic space for digital citizens.

The low knowledge of Indonesian social media users has resulted in cyber bullying becoming widespread again, as happened during the presidential candidate battles in previous years. As in 2019, a study ranked Indonesian citizens as the most impolite netizens in Southeast Asia. The latest Digital Civility Index (DCI) report, which measures the level of digital politeness of world internet users when communicating in cyberspace, showed that Indonesian citizens ranked at the bottom in Southeast Asia, being the most impolite netizens in Southeast Asia according to research results reported. In this research released by Microsoft, the politeness level of Indonesian netizens worsened by eight points to 76, where the higher the number of the level of politeness became the worse. The survey, which had entered its fifth year, observed around 16,000 respondents in 32 regions in 2020 (Ramadhani & Krismono, 2023). However, the analysis of the behavior of digital citizens in 2024, friction and conflict in digital media was not as sharp as in the 2019 and 2014 elections, which was caused by ethical campaign issues which were the platforms of each candidate.

Citizens' digital political ethics in using social media also seem to be controlled through the tagline "ethical politics" by each winning team for each pair of presidential and vice-presidential candidates. Finally, the individual responsibility of digital citizens in Indonesia again refers to Arendt's opinion about awareness as part of the "world". Every individual understands his world. "By thinking about the world, a person makes himself fit into the world. When we seek to understand the

world and show concern for it, we choose the world as our home. Since the world is our own home, it is very important to humanize the world by talking about it." Many things can be done with this by each member of the world, in this case digital citizens, including producing content that educates society. Apart from that, in the 2024 election, identity politics will not be something that can divide massively.

The values based on local wisdom that every Indonesian individual can control in digital ethics in the 2024 elections are the values contained in Pancasila, according to research results. Local ethical values that give people freedom of speech, association and assembly, but within the corridor of not breaking the law and not injuring other people. Pancasila is an ethic that must be upheld as the basis that regulates the lives of Indonesian citizens in the digital world. Even the uniqueness of being a human being who is adaptive to technology with the superior character and integrity of Pancasila (Ruyadi et al., 2023). It is hoped that understanding and practicing the noble values of Pancasila can provide provisions and guidance for a moral life amidst rapid technological advances in the digital era. This is a reality that has significantly influenced various aspects of life. From the Pancasila values, digital media users have a kind of guidance in utilizing digital technology for useful things. In communicating using social media, it is very important to apply this ethic, referring to the values of Pancasila so that there is no disintegration of unity and integrity.

Values and ethics that are in accordance with Pancasila in communicating on social media, for example users do not have the right to insult other religions, respect each other for all forms of differences with good manners and ethics and also respect other cultures. When using social media, when you have different opinions from other people, you must still respect them. Every digital user also needs to develop a fair attitude towards others and respect the work of others. In general, Pancasila as a digital ethic directs Indonesian citizens to have awareness, integrity, responsibility and virtue in everyday life that uses the internet. Values that are understood and adhered to; First, religious values and morality can be applied by respecting other

people when interacting on the internet. Implementing the second principle is equivalent to implementing empathy and tolerance, respecting differences of opinion, upholding unity, prioritizing ethnic, ethnic, racial and religious diversity when interacting with fellow netizens and social media users, acting in a democratic manner with freedom of expression that is responsible for the supremacy of the law, and building an attitude of family, cooperation, and respect for people's work others, and collaborating for progress with the Indonesian nation. This can be seen in the development of society today, where the values of togetherness and humanity emerge through various digital platforms in the form of crowdfunding campaigns for various humanitarian purposes.

Several phenomena in the 2024 Election that must be considered to maintain ethics in the Arendt context can be described in several issues below. First; There is nothing wrong if someone takes a political stance and actions and has a critical attitude towards the phenomenon at hand. However, producing hoax news and narratives for group interests, venting hatred against a political figure or another group that is in opposition, this is not an ethical thing to do. This phenomenon occurs massively, and is carried out by public figures, the success teams of each candidate who are facing each other in the political arena. People's memories are not lost when everyone was widely exposed to narratives about Joko Widodo and Prabowo, which even attacked each other's personal sides. The real battle between netizens was no longer on the rails of debating ideology, ideals and/or vision and mission of candidates. If you look further, it is more than just criticizing, but it has led to deconstruction, killing the character of other people, or other groups who do not agree with their views. Any information that could potentially disrupt his beliefs is quickly removed and denied (Rianto, 2019). This can be seen from each individual's digital footprint on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Awareness of each individual is urgently needed, in order to stop fake news, incitement and hate speech against political opponents. Politeness in politics in the digital space is very much needed.

Second, in contrast to the ideals that are often glorified, sometimes an individual will reduce his

critical power in the digital space if he encounters a narrative that agrees with and supports his political choices. This is easily found in public figures in Indonesia. When faced with a narrative that is considered contradictory, they will quickly reverse the narrative with attacks, but the person concerned will easily agree to anything if it strengthens whatever narrative they have if it positively supports their choice. Surprisingly, these figures are so popular that the public has become part of digital literacy, each narrative of which is then reproduced for distribution. Not many people in the digital community understand the goals of such people, which are aimed at power alone, not about the goodness and science that is always shouted about. Ethically, this needs to be understood about political ethics giving individuals direction to always be logical and rational and always be critical of anything and anyone.

Third, political ethics in the digital space by citizens is not only related to good and bad, right and wrong, moral values (Bertens, 2013), but more than that, this ethics focuses on goodness and benefit, especially in realizing universal human obligations. The measure in universal political life then is that actions, choices of action, writing on digital media, will be ethical if they comply with universal norms and obligations. So universal ethics in digital spaces regulate the same as when people interact in real social spaces.

Lies, hoax narratives to influence mass political actions are wrong in digital ethics. Moreover, the spread of incorrect information on digital forums is a multifold process with the amount reaching more than 20 times more than correct information, according to Fadjroel Rahman, (Wiryawan, 2022). Therefore, according to Rahman; (1) encouraging digital sanity through good narratives. Good and correct narratives must be improved, so that errors in the flow of information or miscommunication can be minimized; (2) encouraging people to tell stories in the digital world. The counter-narrative to all politically incorrect information must stop; (3) increasing the volume of good and true news in the digital space; (4) encouraging as many stories as possible from women, to ward off, overcome the fears and lies that have been created and spread as disinformation. At this point, avoidance and prevention of the many bullyings in the digital world becomes the focus; (5) analyzing and methodology of social networks and vitality in every study and discussion that can be carried out together. Including collaboration between scientific groups, and government involvement. On the other hand, the government is also collaborating with parties to minimize the spread of the flow of incorrect information in the digital space, which is actually recycled information that is published repeatedly.

CONCLUSION

Fake accounts are created specifically for the benefit of the party or person paying. Shaping public opinion, carrying out symbolic violence in online social media with hate speech, blasphemy, insults, false news and slander in the digital world. Then, what is the meaning of social life in the above context? What it means to live together as a nation is worth considering. It needs to be emphasized that for the progress of the Indonesian State, it requires a noble, moral, tolerant, cultured character based on Pancasila and imbued with faith and piety to God Almighty. This is where the ethics, morals and character of each Indonesian digital citizen can be demonstrated. Achieving the character of the Indonesian nation will be realized if individuals (citizens) have good character. Differences, contradictions, conflicts that have resulted in chaos and even disintegration of digital citizens so far, can be overcome by following Arendt's understanding of worldly ethics. Arendt liberates politics from the grip of abstract and universal truth, where everyone always fights in the digital space because they feel they are standing on absolute truth, which closes themselves off from other people's perspectives. The dominance of belief in absolute truth will make people stop thinking and not want to accept the presence of other people. Worldly ethics gives individuals space to think before making a choice of action, providing a basis for the differences that occur between groups of people in the digital space. There is judgment in every action, and no action is value-free, even if it is carried out in digital space.

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