

Digital Political Communication Ecology and the Dynamics of Public Opinion in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: This study analyses digital political communication ecology and its relationship with the dynamics of public opinion in Indonesia. A qualitative library research approach was employed, drawing on internationally reputed and nationally accredited journals, scholarly books, and supporting documents published predominantly between 2021 and 2026. Data were analysed through qualitative content analysis encompassing identification, reduction, categorisation, interpretation, and synthesis, reinforced by source triangulation. The findings show that digital political communication in Indonesia has evolved into a complex ecosystem in which the government, political actors, mass media, digital platforms, algorithms, opinion leaders, and the public interact continuously to produce, distribute, and interpret political information. Platform algorithms drive echo-chamber and filter bubble dynamics that fragment public opinion and accelerate the spread of disinformation. Responsive, fact based, and needs oriented government communication is identified as a key factor in maintaining public trust. The study proposes a Digital Political Communication Ecology Model that conceptualises public opinion formation as the result of dynamic, multi actor interaction within a single interconnected communication ecosystem.

Keywords: *digital political communication, communication ecology, public opinion dynamics*

I. INTRODUCTION

The transformation of communication in the digital era has changed the patterns of information delivery and exchange, making them faster and more interactive, while supported by the use of various digital platforms that encourage society to adapt to technological developments (Alen, 2023) [1]. This change has also transformed political communication through social media as a space for interaction that strengthens the dissemination of political information, increases public participation, and influences the formation of public opinion.

The transformation of digital political communication has altered the patterns of interaction among the government, political actors, media, and society through the use of digital platforms that allow information to be delivered more quickly, openly, and interactively (Nasrullah, 2022) [2]. This change has expanded the space for public participation in the process of political communication while simultaneously intensifying the dynamics of public opinion formation in the digital era (Sulaiman & Fauzi, 2024) [3]. These conditions have shaped a digital political communication ecosystem involving the interaction of various actors, media, and technology in producing, distributing, and influencing political information in Indonesia.

The digital political communication ecosystem in Indonesia has developed through the interconnection of the government, political actors, media, digital platforms, and society all of which use social media as a space for the production, distribution, and interaction of political information, thereby forming increasingly dynamic communication patterns (Biasini et al., 2020) [4]. This development shows that political communication in Indonesia no longer proceeds linearly but is shaped by the interaction of various actors and digital media that collectively form communication dynamics and public opinion in the digital democracy space (Widodo & Kristiyono, 2025) [5]. The increasingly complex interaction within this digital political communication ecosystem also influences the process of formation and change in public opinion, which develops rapidly in digital spaces.

The dynamics of public opinion in the digital era show that opinion formation no longer proceeds linearly but develops through inter user interaction, the spread of viral content, and the influence of algorithms and social media network structures that can produce either consensus or opinion polarisation (Ramya et al., 2026) [6]. This development is further complicated because public opinion is also influenced by the interaction of the government, media, opinion leaders, and

the presence of artificial actors such as bots and trolls that can influence the direction of public discourse in digital spaces (Rabiee et al., 2026) [7]. The complexity of these inter actor relationships indicates that the dynamics of public opinion are the result of continuous interaction among the government, media, digital platforms, and society, and therefore need to be understood through the lens of digital political communication ecology as an interconnected communication ecosystem (Chen et al., 2025) [8].

Digital political communication ecology views political communication as an ecosystem formed through the interconnection of political actors, digital media, technology, and the social environment that mutually influence the processes of producing, distributing, and exchanging political information (Taffel, 2023) [9]. This approach affirms that the dynamics of digital political communication are not only determined by media use but also by the relationships among components of the communication ecosystem that continuously shape participation, interaction, and public opinion (Oricchio, 2021) [10]. Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyse digital political communication ecology and to explain its connection to the dynamics of public opinion in Indonesia as an effort to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of political communication in the digital era.

II. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a library research (*studi pustaka*) method to analyse the concept of digital political communication ecology and the dynamics of public opinion in the digital era. The qualitative approach was selected because it provides a comprehensive understanding of communication phenomena through the interpretation of various relevant scholarly sources, thereby yielding a contextual analysis (Tracy, 2020) [11].

Data collection was conducted through a systematic review of scientific literature sourced from internationally reputed Scopus indexed journals, nationally accredited SINTA journals, scholarly books, and supporting documents discussing digital political communication, communication ecology, digital media, and public opinion. The literature used was prioritised from publications in the last five years (2021-2026) to reflect current developments in the study of digital political communication (Snyder, 2019) [12]; (Booth et al., 2021) [13].

Data analysis was carried out using qualitative content analysis (*analisis isi kualitatif*) through the processes of identification, reduction, categorisation, interpretation, and synthesis of the various concepts found in the literature. These stages aimed to explain the relationships among political actors, digital media,

communication platforms, and society in shaping digital political communication ecology and the dynamics of public opinion in Indonesia (Schreier, 2021) [14]. The validity of the data was strengthened through source triangulation, comparing findings from various scholarly articles, academic books, and prior research results, thereby yielding a more objective interpretation and enhancing the credibility of the research findings (Flick, 2022) [15].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Transformation of Digital Political Communication Ecology in Indonesia

The transformation of digital political communication in Indonesia has changed the way the government, political actors, media, and society interact in conveying political information. The development of digital technology has made social media a more open communication space, so that the dissemination of information proceeds faster and enables society to participate actively in various political issues (Adiputra et al., 2023) [16]. This change shows that political communication is no longer dependent on conventional media but has developed through various digital platforms that form more dynamic communication patterns (Park et al., 2024) [17].

The relationship among the government, media, digital platforms, and society forms a communication ecosystem that mutually influences the process of political information dissemination. According to Jungherr et al. (Jungherr et al., 2023) [18], digital political communication has developed as a network of interactions influenced by platform characteristics, user behaviour, and real time information distribution. This condition causes political communication to no longer proceed linearly but to develop through the interaction of various actors that collectively form the digital public sphere (Vaccari & Chadwick, 2022) [19].

Digital political communication ecology shows that the success of political communication is not only determined by the content of the message but also by the capacity of each actor to utilise technology and build relationships with the public. Research by Gil de Zúñiga et al. (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2022) [20] shows that continuous interaction in digital media can strengthen public participation while simultaneously influencing the formation of public opinion. This condition affirms that communication ecology is an important part of understanding the dynamics of political communication in Indonesia in the digital era (Boulianne, 2023) [21].

The Role of Actors in Digital Political Communication Ecology

The development of digital political communication involves various actors that play different roles in shaping the flow of political information in digital spaces. The government functions as a policy communicator, the media as an information provider, and society as both user and producer of political information through various digital platforms. According to Koc-Michalska et al. (Koc-Michalska et al., 2023) [22], the relationships among these actors create more participatory communication patterns because each actor can mutually influence the process of delivering and receiving information. These interactions cause political communication to develop as an open and dynamic ecosystem (Bossetta, 2022) [23].

Digital media has also changed the role of political actors in building communication with society. Politicians are no longer fully dependent on mass media because social media allows direct delivery of political messages to the public. Research by Enli and Rosenberg (Enli & Rosenberg, 2022) [24] shows that digital political communication encourages political actors to build closeness through content that is more interactive, personal, and responsive to emerging issues. This condition shows that the effectiveness of political communication is influenced by the capacity of each actor to adapt communication strategies to the characteristics of digital platforms (Kreiss, 2023) [25].

Public participation is an important component in digital political communication ecology because the public does not only receive information but also plays a role in spreading, interpreting, and evaluating various political issues. Research by Freelon and Wells (Freelon & Wells, 2022) [26] shows that public interaction through social media can expand the space for public discussion and increase digital political engagement. The mutually influencing relationship among the government, media, political actors, and society indicates that each component contributes to the formation of adaptive political communication in the digital era (Theocharis & Jungherr, 2024) [27].

Digital Platforms and Algorithms in the Formation of Public Opinion

Digital platforms have become the primary space for the dissemination of political information because they can connect political actors with society quickly and without geographical boundaries. The development of social media has also transformed the mechanism of information distribution through algorithms that select and recommend content according to user behaviour. According to Klinger and Svensson (Klinger & Svensson, 2022) [28], platform algorithms play a role in determining the visibility of information, which in turn can influence the intensity

of public exposure to certain political issues. This condition makes digital platforms not only communication media but also actors that influence the formation of public opinion (Bennett & Pfetsch, 2023) [29].

Platform algorithms create different patterns of information consumption for each user based on preferences, interactions, and digital activity history. This condition causes citizens to more frequently receive information aligned with their political views, thereby reinforcing the phenomenon of echo chambers and filter bubbles. Research by Kaiser et al. (Kaiser et al., 2022) [30] shows that information personalisation can increase user engagement but may also reduce the diversity of information received by society. This change influences the process of public opinion formation because individuals tend to interact with information that reinforces their existing political beliefs (Cinelli et al., 2021) [31].

The use of artificial intelligence and data analytics further strengthens the influence of digital platforms in political communication. This technology enables the dissemination of political information to be conducted in a more targeted manner through audience segmentation and user behaviour analysis. According to Howard (Howard, 2024) [32], the development of digital technology provides opportunities for political actors to improve the effectiveness of communication but also presents challenges in the form of information manipulation and the spread of disinformation. This condition indicates that digital platforms and algorithms are important components in political communication ecology because they also determine the direction of public opinion formation in the digital era (Bradshaw & Howard, 2023) [33].

Dynamics of Public Opinion in the Digital Political Communication Ecosystem

The dynamics of public opinion in the digital era develop through rapid interaction among the government, media, digital platforms, and society. Political information spread through social media is not only received by the public but is also interpreted, discussed, and disseminated, forming diverse perceptions of an issue. According to Dubois and Blank (Dubois & Blank, 2023) [34], this communication pattern shows that public opinion is increasingly influenced by user activity in digital spaces compared to one directional political communication. This condition makes public opinion develop dynamically in line with changes in information flows and inter-user interaction (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2024) [35].

The speed of information dissemination also increases the likelihood of opinion polarisation forming as a result of exposure to information that is not always balanced. Platform algorithms push users to interact more frequently with content that matches their preferences, thereby reinforcing the tendency for

groups with similar political views to form. Research by Guess et al. (Guess et al., 2022) [36] shows that the characteristics of digital information distribution can accelerate the spread of disinformation while reinforcing the fragmentation of opinion in the public sphere. This condition poses a challenge for the government in maintaining the quality of political communication and public trust in official information (Humprecht et al., 2022) [37].

The government's capacity to build responsive communication is an important factor in maintaining the stability of public opinion in the digital era. Open, rapid, and needs-based information delivery can reduce information gaps while increasing public trust in government policies. According to Nielsen and Fletcher (Nielsen & Fletcher, 2023) [38], adaptive political communication encourages the creation of stronger relationships between the government and society through the use of digital media. These dynamics show that public opinion is the result of the interaction of various components in digital political communication ecology that continues to develop in line with changes in technology and societal behaviour (Van Aelst et al., 2024) [39].

Digital Political Communication Ecology Model for Public Opinion Formation in Indonesia

Digital political communication ecology in Indonesia shows that public opinion formation is the result of the interaction of various communication components that mutually influence each other in digital spaces. The government, political actors, mass media, digital platforms, and society have complementary roles in the processes of production, distribution, and interpretation of political information. According to Carlson et al. (Carlson et al., 2023) [40], digital political communication develops as a system involving various actors with different levels of influence on the formation of public perception. This relationship shows that the effectiveness of political communication depends on the interconnection of every component in the digital ecosystem (Bimber, 2022) [41].

Digital-technology development strengthens the role of algorithms and artificial intelligence in determining the distribution of political information to society. Algorithms not only regulate the visibility of information but also influence patterns of user interaction through content recommendations tailored to the preferences of each individual. Research by Kreiss and McGregor (Kreiss & McGregor, 2023) [42] explains that the logic of digital platforms has changed political communication strategies because the success of message delivery is increasingly determined by the information distribution mechanisms controlled by platforms. This condition indicates that public opinion formation is influenced by

the relationships among communication actors, digital technology, and societal behaviour in the digital public sphere (Bossetta, 2023) [43].

The digital political communication ecology model proposed in this study positions the government, political actors, media, digital platforms, algorithms, opinion leaders, and society as the main components that interact with each other in shaping public opinion. The relationships among these components proceed dynamically through the processes of information production, message distribution, public interaction, feedback, and evaluation that continue to develop in line with changes in digital technology. This model shows that public opinion formation is no longer influenced by a single dominant actor but is the result of the interaction of all elements in the digital political communication ecosystem, and can therefore serve as a conceptual perspective for analysing Indonesian political communication in the era of digital transformation.

IV. CONCLUSION

Digital political communication ecology shows that political communication in Indonesia has evolved into an ecosystem involving the government, political actors, media, digital platforms, algorithms, and society in the process of forming political information. According to Carlson et al. (Carlson et al., 2023) [40], the relationships among these components form mutually influencing communication patterns so that information dissemination no longer proceeds linearly but through dynamic interaction in digital spaces. This condition affirms that the effectiveness of political communication is determined by the capacity of every actor to build collaboration and adapt to changes in the digital communication environment (Bimber, 2022) [41].

The dynamics of public opinion in the digital era are influenced by the characteristics of digital platforms, algorithmic mechanisms, and the high level of public participation in producing and distributing political information. Research by Nielsen and Fletcher (Nielsen & Fletcher, 2023) [38] shows that responsive political communication grounded in public needs can strengthen public trust in the government amid an increasingly complex information flow. This condition shows that adaptive political communication management is an important factor in reducing disinformation, maintaining the quality of the digital public sphere, and strengthening the legitimacy of government policies (Van Aelst et al., 2024) [39].

The digital political communication ecology model generated in this study shows that public opinion formation is the result of continuous interaction among political actors, media, digital technology, and society within a single

communication ecosystem. According to Kreiss and McGregor (Kreiss & McGregor, 2023) [42], the development of digital platforms has changed political communication strategies so that managing inter component relationships becomes an important aspect of creating effective political communication. These findings provide a conceptual contribution in the form of a digital political communication ecology model that can serve as a reference for the development of political communication studies and as a basis for further research on digital political communication in Indonesia (Bossetta, 2023) [43].

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