

POLITICAL CULTURE AND SOCIETY'S POLITICAL ORIENTATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the relationship between political culture and people's political orientation in the digital era. The digital era has had a significant influence on the way people obtain information and engage in political activities. In this context, political culture is important because it can affect the political orientation of society. This study uses a qualitative approach with qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. The results of the study show that political culture which consists of political values, political participation, and political mindset influences people's political orientation in the digital era. Societies that have a participatory political culture and democratic values tend to have a more active and critical political orientation in the digital era. Meanwhile, people who have an authoritarian political culture and traditional values tend to have a more passive and conservative political orientation in the digital era. This research contributes to the understanding of the relationship between political culture and people's political orientation in the digital era and provides implications for the development of strategies for political participation and management of social media in the future.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A nation's political culture is intrinsically linked to the nation's political life. Political culture, in its broadest sense, refers to the way in which people of a society interact with and are influenced by the state, its institutions, and its policies (Sanusi & Darmawan, 2016). Having the understanding to take part in collective decision-making and the creation of public policies for the entire society is a hallmark of a society with a developed political culture (Maarotong, 2020).

Political culture is a subset of societal culture that exhibits greater individualism. Legitimacy, power structures, government policy-making procedures, political party actions, state apparatus behavior, and social upheaval against the ruling power are all aspects of what are collectively referred to as "political culture" (Saleh & Munif, 2015). A society's political culture reflects its shared norms and worldview. The public and the elites in any given community, for example, may have very different political cultures (Sumartono, 2018).

How strong the political culture in a country is, one of which is determined by how much political participation the people have. This participation will be seen when the community is actively involved in political life (Pureklokton, 2021). According to a political scientist, the late Miriam Budiardjo in his book *Participation and Political Parties*, high or low political participation in society is an important indicator of how democracy is developing in the country. The higher the level of people's political participation, it shows that they care about political developments in their country. Conversely, the lower the number of people's political participation in a country is a bad sign (Budiardjo, 1998).

The development of information and communication technology in the digital era, especially in the field of social media, has had many impacts on changing patterns in the lives of Indonesian people, including in the political field. Changes in the political field can be seen in the emergence of new forms of political participation. If in the past there was someone who wanted to express his opinion regarding politics through paper leaflets which were distributed or through writing in the mass media, now it is enough to write it on Facebook status, etc. Then it is shared by other people. In fact, history has recorded the fall of a regime that has been in power for decades just because of someone's writing on social media (Indrawan et al, 2021).

This change provides greater space for the political participation of people who were previously underrepresented. In the Indonesian context, social media has become an effective tool for minority groups and social movements to voice their aspirations (Triantoro, 2019). History has recorded how a social movement in Indonesia managed to garner support and change people's views with the help of social media. These movements show that social media can be a powerful means of mobilizing society and producing changes in political life (Triantoro, 2019).

The development of information and communication technology (ICT) in the digital era can also change people's political orientation. In this case, social media and online platforms provide greater space for community political participation, so that people can be more actively involved in public discussions and debates related to politics. Through social media, the public can access political information quickly and easily, including information related to developing political issues. This allows the community to be more informed and have a broader understanding of current political issues, so that it can influence people's political orientation (Setyowati et al, 2022).

In addition, social media also provides space for the public to express their opinions and aspirations regarding politics. The public can write posts or comments on social media to express opinions or provide support for a particular political issue or political candidate. This can affect people's political orientation in supporting or rejecting an issue or political candidate (Susanto, 2021).

However, it should be remembered that the influence of social media and online platforms on people's political orientation is not absolute and must be seen in a broader context. People's political orientation is also influenced by other factors such as education, life experience, cultural values, and political identity. Therefore, the development of ICT is only one of the factors that can influence people's political orientation, and must be seen in a wider context (Susanto, 2021).

The development of information and communication technology (ICT) in the digital era has had a significant influence on the political culture and political orientation of society. Therefore, the formulation of the research problem is how the development of ICT in the digital era affects the political culture and political orientation of society. The purpose of this research is to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of ICT developments on political culture and the political orientation of society in the digital era.

The benefit of this research is that it can provide new insights regarding effective ways to influence people's political orientation in the digital era, especially through social media and online platforms. In addition, this research can contribute to the development of studies related to political culture and the political orientation of society in the digital era. The results of this research are expected to be useful for academics, researchers, activists, political practitioners, and society in general.

2. METHODS

By using qualitative methods and complete data collection techniques, this research can uncover and understand the role of political culture in shaping people's political orientation in the digital era (Sugiyono, 2011). In this study, observation techniques are used to observe phenomena that occur directly, both in political activities and in the use of social media. Interview techniques are used to get the views and attitudes of respondents related to the phenomenon being studied. While documentation techniques are used to collect data from documents or archives related to political activities and the use of social media. The process of data analysis in this study was carried out using data reduction techniques, data presentation, and verification or drawing conclusions. The data reduction stage is carried out by narrowing the research focus and reducing irrelevant data to the research focus. Furthermore, data is presented regularly and systematically in the form of findings which are presented descriptively. The verification stage is carried out by checking the suitability of the data obtained with the theory used in the research and ensuring the correctness of the data obtained.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Political Culture

Individuals who are embedded in a society always have some degree of orientation toward the political system that governs that community. This occurs in both contemporary and ancient communities. In terms of political culture, it is safe to say that people evaluate how they fit into the political system. To grasp political culture in this way is to grasp the interplay between the system and the person as they approach politics (Sudijono, 1995).

Culture, including political culture, is something that every civilization, whether it has a traditional or modern political system, possesses. In this context, Almond and Verba describe political culture as the way people feel about and interact with the political system and its parts, as well as the various roles that can be played within that system. In addition, Almond and Verba recognize three distinct perspectives when considering political objects. The first is a cognitive perspective, which centers on one's understanding of and commitment to political norms and values. Second, one's emotional perspective, or one's thoughts about the political system and everyone and everything involved in it. The third type of orientation is an evaluative one, in which one makes judgments and inferences about political objects based on a mix of objective standards and subjective factors such as knowledge and emotion.

The political culture of a society is said to evolve and be shaped by the societal norms and values that exist within it. Interactions between perspectives and values characterize people's daily lives. It follows that in order to establish a process of interaction that will lead to cultural development, it is necessary to intertwine and link between cultural values and between components of orientation in society within the framework of developing the political culture of a nation.

In terms of classifications, Gabriel A. Almond and Verba (2015) distinguish between "parochial" (local), "subject," and "participant" political cultures.

- a) A parochial political culture is one in which political participation is extremely low. A society's political culture is considered parochial if the frequency of its orientation toward the four dimensions that determine political culture is close to zero or if it pays no regard to these four dimensions. This form of political culture is typical of African tribal communities and

Indonesian rural communities. In this society, no special political roles exist. Typically, tribal chiefs, village leaders, kyai, or shamans summarize all extant roles, whether political, economic, or religious.

- b) Subject political culture, specifically the political culture of a society that is socially and economically relatively advanced but still passive. It can be said that the political culture of a society is a subject if there is a high frequency of orientation toward knowledge of the political system in general and output objects, or if there is an understanding of government policies designed to strengthen the political system. However, the frequency of orientation regarding the government's structure and function in policymaking is not given much consideration. Subjects are aware of and effectively directed towards government authority. The attitude of the populace toward the current political system is manifested by a sense of pride or even disdain. In essence, the political culture of the subject already possesses adequate knowledge of the political system and the process of strengthening government policies.
- c) Participant political culture is a political culture characterized by exceptionally high levels of political consciousness. Communities can express their views and participate in political activities. Political culture is also a type of political culture in which community members have a solid understanding of the four political culture determinants. They participate actively in the ongoing political process and have adequate knowledge of the political system in general, the government's role in policy formation and implementation, and the government's role in policy enforcement. In all of the aforementioned dimensions, people tend to be directed toward active personal roles, although their sentiments and evaluations of these roles may be either accepting or rejecting.

B. Political Orientation

Everyone in a society has a political orientation, which manifests itself in their daily interactions with the state, its administration, its politics, its laws, and its customs and norms. A society with the level of self-awareness required to engage in shared decision-making and the collaborative development of public policies for the good of everyone can be said to have a political orientation. Because political orientation is not always manifested in behavior, it is important to distinguish between internal and external forms of political behavior (Surbakti, 1992). Political orientation is still at the level of abstract individual thought, but after that, political participation will form and individuals will behave politically.

The term "political orientation" encompasses a wide range of ideas, from "seeing" to "knowing" to "views" to "opinions" According to Almond and Verba, "political culture" refers to the way in which citizens view the political system and their place within it. The degree to which citizens in a country have common attitudes and values regarding key political issues. Further, they claimed that citizens' identification with state symbols and institutions is shaped by their orientation, and that individuals use their orientation to evaluate and reevaluate their status in the political system (Said, 2007).

It is impossible to have a conversation on political orientation without touching on both the orientation toward the well-being of the people and the orientation toward the ownership of power by the political elite. The success of power-hungry political elites is predicated only on their ability to amass more authority and prestige, while the power of capital- and business-wielding political elites is more commonly put to use (Damsar, 2012).

The three elements of political objects that Almond and Verba (2015) identify in their taxonomy of political orientation are as follows:

- a) Mind-based Element The cognitive aspect, or the part that involves one's thoughts and beliefs in regards to politics and the roles and responsibilities one has as a citizen;
- b) The emotional facet Feelings towards the political system, its roles, its actors, or their performances constitute the emotive dimension.
- c) The criterion for judgment Evaluative criteria entail the application of value judgments to political objects and events in accordance with established norms.

The aforementioned triad is not an independent entity. One must have sufficient knowledge about a political item in order to create an evaluation of it, but this knowledge must have been colored, moulded, and influenced by one's own emotions. On the flip side, one's attitude toward a political item might be affected by one's familiarity with that thing.

C. Political Culture and Society's Political Orientation in the Digital Age

Political culture is described by Almond and Verba as a sort of attitude or orientation that citizens have towards the political system and the numerous parts contained within it, in addition to the duties and obligations of citizens within that system. In this context, the term "political culture" refers to a variety of factors that are connected to the political system. These features include how the system functions, the structures and processes that are utilized, as well as the norms and values that individuals have regarding their participation in the system.

In addition, citizens' perspectives and orientations with regard to the duties and responsibilities they play within the political system are a component of political culture. This is a reference to the participation of citizens in a wide variety of political activities, such as voting, deciding issues, and becoming a part of political groups. In this instance, the perspective and orientation of citizens is of utmost significance because it has the potential to affect both the way in which citizens participate in the political system and the way in which the political system functions to serve the general public interest.

During this period of digital advancement, the proliferation of information and communication technology (ICT) has had a substantial influence on the political culture of modern civilization. The emergence of novel modes of public political participation made possible by social media and other online venues reveals a shifting dynamic in the pattern of public engagement with political affairs at the present time. In this sense, social media and internet platforms have increased the available space for public political participation. This is particularly true for community organizations that previously lacked access to traditional political space.

The growth of information and communication technologies has had a number of effects on the political culture of society. One of these effects is the rise of modes of political engagement that are quicker, simpler, and more efficient. For instance, the public is able to more readily express their thoughts and share information relevant to politics through the use of social media, which includes the sharing of written content, photographs, and videos. This information has the potential to quickly travel globally and sway the attitude of the general population. This opens up opportunities for community groups that were not adequately represented in the political process in the past to participate more actively in those processes now.

However, the impact of ICT developments on the political culture of society is not only positive. One of the main challenges faced is the possibility of polarization and radicalization in

political discussions and debates on social media. In some cases, social media can be a place for spreading hoaxes and content that is negative or contains hate towards other groups. This can form public opinion that is less objective and detrimental to the democratic process.

The political culture of the people plays an important role in shaping their political orientation. In the digital era, people with a participatory political culture and democratic values tend to have a more active and critical political orientation. This is because the political culture of the participants views political participation as important in realizing democracy, while democratic values emphasize freedom, equality and justice in the political system. Thus, the political orientation of society in the digital era is influenced by the political culture it adheres to.

In the digital era, people with a participatory political culture tend to have a more active and critical political orientation. This can be seen from the increasing political participation of the people through social media and online platforms. Communities with a participatory political culture feel that social media and online platforms are an effective means of conveying their political opinions and aspirations. In addition, they also tend to use social media and online platforms to criticize government policies and fight for their rights.

However, not all societies have a participatory political culture and democratic values. Some societies have a patrimonial political culture, in which political participation is seen as insignificant, and political power is seen as a source of personal gain. This patrimonial political culture tends to produce a passive and less critical political orientation in society. As a result, people with a patrimonial political culture are not very active in political participation and tend to accept political decisions without criticism.

Meanwhile for authoritarian political culture and traditional values, people's political orientation tends to be more passive and conservative in the digital era. This is caused by factors such as lack of access or understanding of sophisticated information and communication technology, as well as distrust of information spread on social media and online platforms.

An authoritarian political culture that tends to prioritize hierarchy and obedience to political rulers or elites, makes it difficult for people to question or even criticize the policies taken by the government. Thus, the political orientation that appears in an authoritarian political culture tends to be passive and accepts existing conditions. In addition, traditional values that emphasize loyalty to certain groups or classes can also influence people's political orientation. This can be seen from the tendency to prefer expressing opinions directly in certain groups rather than through social media.

However, this does not mean that authoritarian political culture and traditional values cannot adapt to developments in information and communication technology in the digital era. Several studies have shown that with wider access to technology and information, people with an authoritarian political culture and traditional values can begin to question government policies and form a more critical political orientation.

In this case, the role of social media and online platforms can be an important factor in shaping people's political orientation. People in an authoritarian political culture and traditional values can use social media to obtain more diverse information and broaden their political horizons. In the long run, this can influence people's political orientation to be more critical and participatory.

In a broader context, changes in people's political orientation towards an authoritarian political culture and traditional values in the digital era can also affect changes in the political

system as a whole. With a more active and critical political orientation, the public can become agents of change and influence towards more transparent and accountable governance.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted on political culture and people's political orientation in the digital era, it can be concluded that the development of information and communication technology has had a major impact on people's political participation. Social media and online platforms have become a new means for citizens to participate in political life, with opportunities to talk about political issues and provide support for or critique government policies and actions. The political culture of society also influences political orientation, where people with a participatory political culture and democratic values tend to have a more active and critical political orientation in the digital era. Meanwhile, authoritarian political culture and traditional values tend to have a more passive and conservative political orientation in the digital era. The results of this research can provide benefits for the government in designing policies that pay attention to the development of information and communication technology as a means of community political participation, as well as for the community to better understand their role in political life. Thus, it is important for the government and society to pay attention to and understand the impact of developments in information and communication technology on political culture and political orientation of society in the digital era, so that healthy and effective political participation can be created in building a sustainable democracy.

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