



Political Campaign Ethics on Twitter Based on Local Ethnic in Indonesia

Syukri Syukri¹ , Dadang Rahmat Hidayat² , Atwar Bajari³ , Hafied Cangara⁴ 

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Corresponding Author:

Syukri

Communication Science, Social and Political Sciences, Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia. Email: syukri17001@mail.unpad.ac.id

Abstract: The purpose of the study is to examine opportunities in terms of the ethics of political campaigns based on the philosophy of local ethnic Bugis during the 2018 election of the Governor of South Sulawesi on Twitter. The study used a quantitative research design using a survey method. In the study, descriptive content analysis was applied to define the narrative of political campaign ethics based on Bugis's Philosophy on Twitter. The research subjects were Twitter users who discussed topics and issues surrounding the cultural and moral values of the Bugis philosophy. Data are extracted from the official accounts of the 2018 South Sulawesi Governor candidates for analysis using NVivo 12 Plus. The findings of this study explained that the ethics of political campaigns based on Bugis philosophy are not only confined to discussion in public spheres but have also been under discussion in digital spaces such as Twitter.

Keywords: Political Campaigns, Cultural Philosophy, Twitter, Elections, Digital Democracy

1. Introduction

Political campaigns in some regions of Indonesia are still carried out with actions that violate democratic values (Aspinall et al., 2017; Lim, 2017). (Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum, 2019) reported that there were 7,598 violations and reports during the 2019 election. The highest violations were found in East Java, with 3002 cases, and South Sulawesi, with 806 cases. South Sulawesi appears to be a fairly vulnerable area; it is classified as an area that is often associated with reports of ethics violations for political campaigns during the election period.

These violations have also transformed public spaces to digital spaces based on the internet, such as social networks. Intolerance, propaganda, and hoaxes could be easily consumed on social media, especially Twitter. Previous studies have found several violations of social media, but the most common are related to intolerance, propaganda, and hoaxes (Lim, 2017; Utami, 2018). They are considered as one of the inhibiting factors for the growth of democracy; a more comprehensive and informative approach is needed, especially in initiating ideas about political ethics during the period of the political campaign.

Political campaign ethics aim to ensure that the election is held properly, fairly, and accurately (Amadu et al., 2022). There are four reasons why ethics is important in political campaigns, especially in Indonesia. Firstly, the characteristics of a pluralistic society guided by moral teachings can be used as references. Secondly, a society that accepts civilized changes will be expected to carry out innovations at the structural and cultural levels of society. Third, there is potential for interest deviation in various existing life relationships. Ethics helps to find reasons and other interests that exist. Fourthly, ethics helps humans to initiate a dialogue on moral values with various dimensions of human life, such as science (Suseno, 2005). (Cangara, 2016) In the Bugis Makassar community in South Sulawesi, there are also popular moral values, namely *sipakatau* (mutual respect), *sipakainge* (advising each other), and *sipakalebbi* (glorify each other) (Prabowo & Mulya, 2018). Political campaigns that use moral values as ethical reinforcement are persuasive efforts to ask and influence other people who disagree with the ideas to participate in accepting and engaging in the same socio-political discourse in supporting the creation of stable, democratic political conditions and mutual benefit (Denton Jr. et al., 2019; Ohl et al., 2013; Colombo, 2021).

The concept of *sipakatau*, understood by the Bugis community in the practise of daily life, is a balance between rights and obligations at all social levels. If there

¹Communication Science, Social and Political Sciences, Padjadjaran University, Bandung Indonesia. Email: syukri17001@mail.unpad.ac.id

²Communication Science, Social and Political Sciences, Padjadjaran University, Bandung Indonesia. Email: dadang.rahmat@unpad.ac.id

³Communication Science, Social and Political Sciences, Padjadjaran University, Bandung Indonesia. Email: atwar.bajari@unpad.ac.id

⁴Communication Science, Social and Political Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia. Email: cangara_hafied@yahoo.com

is an imbalance between rights and obligations, then that means there is injustice. Sipakatau is universal, as are human rights themselves. The long debate in the history of civilization, starting from the theory of natural law and the positivistic theory of cultural relativity to ideological thinking, affirming our belief in the idea of human rights or sipakatau, absolutely must be upheld as the noblest creature of all creatures on earth (Salim, Salik, & Wekke, 2018).

According to Mattulada (1985), sipakatau can be interpreted as humanizing humans. This concept is one of the messages of the previous people (pappasenna tau rioloe) in the community of the Bugis tribe that needs to be a source of life. As mentioned in a book that states that upasekko makketenning ri limae akkateningeng: mammulanna, ri no tongenge'; maduanna, ri lempue; matellunna, ri getteng'e; maeppana, sipak oru; malimanna, mappucue ri dewata seuwae. It means that I order you to the five handles: first, to the word true; second, in honesty; third, in courage; fourth, mutual respect/humanize each other; fifth, surrender to God Almighty (Mallombasi, 2012).

The Sipakatau philosophy is a trait that does not discriminate against each others. That is, in the eyes of God, all people are the same. There is no difference in degree, wealth, beauty, or others. This then translates into the fact that humans should respect each other. This spirit encourages the growth of attitudes and actions implemented in harmonious social relations characterized by the existence of intersubjectivity and mutual respect as human beings. Respect for fellow human beings becomes the main foundation in attitudes and behaviours with fellow human beings, as well as mutual respect for civilization and identity for each member of the community (Syarif, Astina, & Sumarmi, 2016).

Sipakainge means to remind each other. In the teachings of the Bugis tribe, *sipakainge* has two important values, namely warani (courage) and arung (leaders). Warani teaches humans to have the courage to express their opinions, both criticism and suggestions, to improve, while Arung teaches that every leader has the humility to accept all criticism and advice.

The practice of political campaigns that vilify, bring down, and attack personal opponents is a behaviour that not only violates the ethical principles of *sipakatau*, *sipakainge*, and *sipakalebbi*, but also erodes the joints of harmony between communities, especially the Bugis tribe community, which in turn can create elite and horizontal conflicts. Leaders who compete in the contest for the election of the Governor and Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi, together with the winning teams, are bad examples for the community.

A political campaign is a form of political communication carried out by people at a certain time with the aim of creating certain effects to obtain and strengthen political support from voters. Political campaigns are carried out by maximizing the use of different media platforms (Kreiss & McGregor, 2017). Thus, political campaigns that start with media platforms also need to consider the elements of morality and ethics during the process of political campaigning, including moral values such as sipakatau (mutual respect), sipakainge (advice each other), and sipakalebbi (glorify each other) in South Sulawesi.

Furthermore, studies on the ethics of political campaigns based on Bugis philosophical values (*sipakatau*, *esipakainge*, and *sipakalebbi*) are associated with digitalization, and social networks are still limited, especially in political campaigns such as the gubernatorial election. However, there are some trends from previous studies that can be mapped and considered quite relevant. First, the narration of Bugis philosophy about sipakatau, sipakainge, and sipakalebbi is considered useful in sociopolitical life for interaction (Herlin et al., 2020; Yakub et al., 2018). Second, ethics assessment has also been transformed into the digital space, so a more comprehensive approach is needed, especially during elections (Townsend & Wallace, 2017; Saurwein & Spencer-Smith, 2020). Third, now political campaigns use social media platforms among voters, politicians, and election organizers (Salahudin et al., 2020; Widayat et al., 2022; Baharuddin et al., 2022; Ahmad et al., 2019).

The aim of this study is to fill the gaps in previous studies by taking an analytical approach related to the ethics of political campaigns based on Bugis philosophy. There are three research questions that are formulated in this research. (1) How is the narrative about Bugis philosophy (*sipakatau*, *sipakainge*, *sipakalebbi*) being discussed on Twitter? (2) How Bugis' philosophical narratives (*sipakatau*, *sipakainge*, *sipakalebbi*) during the 2018 South Sulawesi governor election period are based on the candidates' official Twitter accounts. (3) What are the implications of the emergence of Bugis philosophical narratives on Twitter on democratization? The study will contribute in terms of knowing the extent of the spread of terms in Bugis philosophy during the 2018 gubernatorial election in South Sulawesi, as well as knowing the implications of Bugis philosophy on the idea of democratic development.

2. Methodology

The study used a quantitative research design using the survey as a method. This method is suitable for collecting large sets of data in a short time. In the study, descriptive content analysis was applied to define the narrative of political campaign ethics based on Bugis philosophy on Twitter social media. The current study has started with the following research question: Are ethics of political campaigns based on Bugis philosophy discussed in the public sphere and have also been transformed into digital spaces such as Twitter? The research subjects are users of social networks Twitter related to topics, as well as issues surrounding the cultural and moral values of Bugis

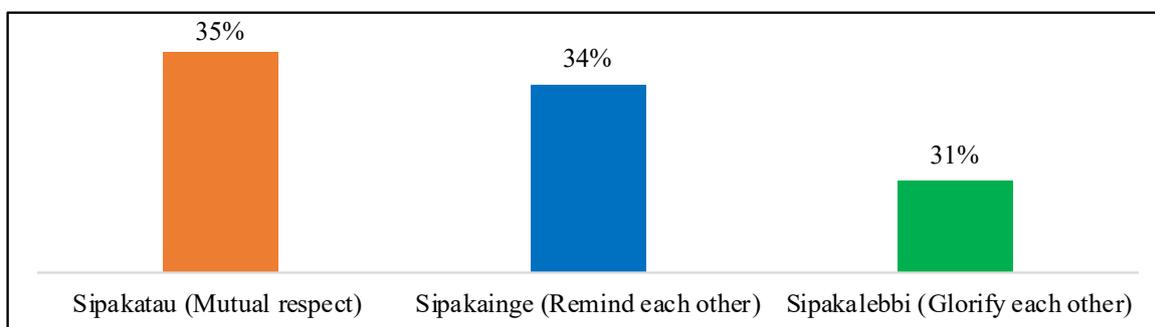
philosophy, such as *sipakatau* (mutual respect), *sipakainge* (advice each other), and *sipakalebbi* (glorify each other). The source of data is taken from Twitter social networks, which are adjusted to the official accounts of the 2018 South Sulawesi Governor candidates, including Agus Arifin Nu'mang (@agusnumang168), Nurdin Abdullah (@nurdinabdullah), Nurdin Halid (@NhNurdinhalid), and Ichsan Yasin Limpo (@IYasinLimpo). The data source is then collected using the Ncapture feature found in Google Chrome. The collected data is transferred to the NVivo 12 Plus analysis tool. The unit of analysis used is a Text Search Query, which focuses on search keywords on terms (*sipakatau* or mutual respect), (*sipakainge* or advice each other), and (*sipakalebbi* or glorify each other). Based on the research question, this study has tried to validate hypotheses.

H1: The ethics of political campaigns based on Bugis philosophy are discussed in the public sphere and have also been transformed into digital spaces such as Twitter.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1 Narrative of Political Campaigning Ethics Based on Bugis Philosophy on Twitter

During the 2018 gubernatorial election period, candidates took advantage of social media platforms as a new communication space to influence voter responses. The use of social media platforms encourages its users to participate in political discussions. In addition to discussing the characteristics of the governor representative and nonrepresentative, there is another narrative about the importance of Bugis philosophical values to reduce political differences, misleading, and violations of political campaigns.



Graph 1: Narrative of political campaign ethics based on local ethnic Bugis philosophy on Twitter.

Source: Content Analysis (2018)

Graph 1 shows the narrative of the local ethnic Bugis philosophy during the 2018 governor election in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The narrative was successfully identified through a search based on tweets linking the names of the governor candidates. *Sipakatau* (mutual respect) appears in discussions (35%) on Twitter. It seems to be more common during the election. The ethics of the political campaign that relates the candidates and the voters on Twitter appears as an effort to reduce differences in determining representative choices. The ethics for mutual respect is also considered as an anticipation of other non-democratic actions that lead to disputes. Therefore, it is good to see a difference with mutual respect for the choices that exist to hinder disputes.

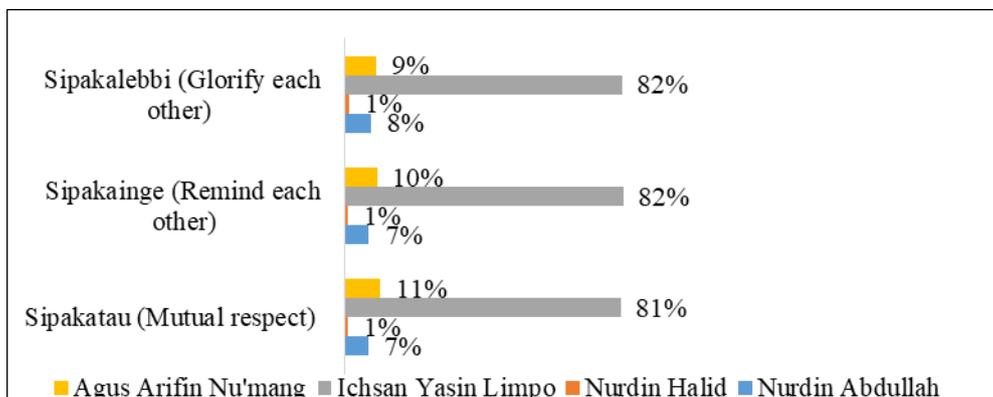
Other Bugis philosophies, such as *sipakainge*, with 34% of tweets, are also discussed on Twitter. This philosophy contributed a lot to maintaining political ethics during the campaign. Candidates and voters involved in social media discussions seem to present ethical values to remind users and voters to maintain their attitudes. Another Bugis philosophy is *sipakalebbi* (glorifying each other), which has seen less use (31%) compared to their ethical values. The term *sipakalebbi* is also discussed on Twitter but is not as dominant as other philosophical values. However, the term *sipakalebbi* also contributed to maintaining the ethics of political campaigns during the election. However, the choice and decision of the twitter user as voters should be appreciated.

Based on the data, it is known that the Bugis philosophy (*sipakatau*, *sipakainge*, *sipakalebbi*) has also been transformed on Twitter, which can be useful in influencing the situation and attitudes of voters during the election. This philosophy encourages other social media users to participate in the same discourse, maintaining ethics during political campaigns. The Bugis philosophy on Twitter also anticipates the emergence of a black campaign on social media, such as intolerance and hoaxes. The black campaign is to accuse the opposing party of false or unproven accusations, or through irrelevant matters related to their capacity as leaders. The transformation of *sipakatau*, *sipakainge*, and *sipakalebbi* from public space to digital space is a good effort to maintain ethics during political campaigns.

This is relevant to the statement of Crawford that social networks have the ability to easily promote the image of a political party all over the world. Every political party provides social networks for their loyal audience, and to obtain more active persons online. Social media platforms give politicians access to millions of users and offer the ability to build a sense of camaraderie and connection with a wide constituency (Crawford, 2009).

3.2 Local Ethnic and Bugis Philosophical Narrative Mapping on the Candidate's Official Twitter Accounts

From the emerging narratives, additional analysis is still needed to map out the dominant narratives that appear in the candidate's official accounts. The narrative that emerged from the candidate's official account was the trigger for the emergence of discussions related to the ethics of political campaigns and Bugis' philosophical approach.

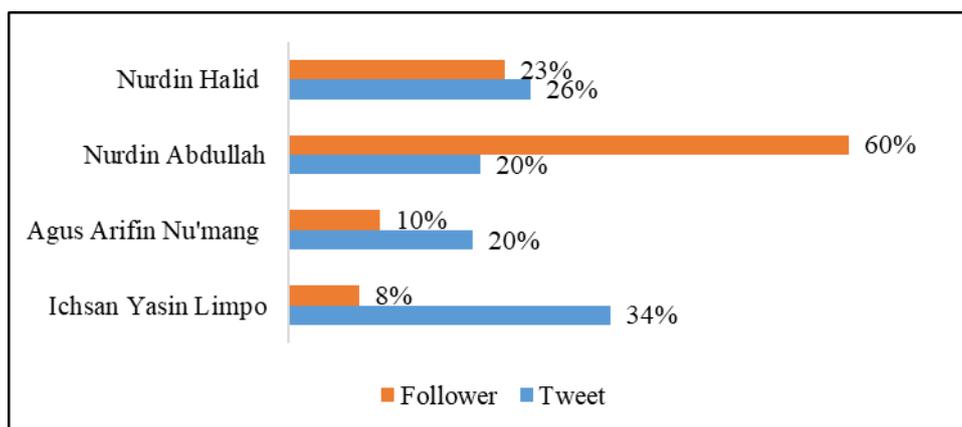


Graph 2: Mapping the narrative of local ethnic Bugis philosophy based on discussions on the candidate's official Twitter account.

Source: Content Analysis (2018)

Graph 2 shows the results of the mapping identified through the candidate's official accounts. The trend assessed that each candidate has a positive contribution to efforts to uphold the ethics of political campaigns during the election by carrying out the values contained in the local ethnic Bugis philosophy of *sipakatau* (mutual respect), *sipakainge* (advice each other), and *sipakalebbi* (glorify each other). From these data, it is known that candidate Ichsan Yasin Limpo (@IYasinLimpo) dominated the dissemination of narratives related to political ethics based on local ethics and Bugis philosophy during the 2018 gubernatorial election in South Sulawesi. In addition to Ichsan Yasin Limpo, other candidates who also influenced the level of sequentially are Agus Arifin Nu'mang (@agusnumang168), Nurdin Abdullah (@nurdinabdullahh), and Nurdin Halid (@NhNurdinhalid). The mapping obtained from the data shows that the Bugis philosophical narratives, such as *sipakatau* (mutual respect), are more popular topics of discussion followed by than other terms, other terms, ipakainge (advice each other), and *sipakalebbi* (glorify each other).

Ichsan Yasin Limpo is the dominant candidate influencing the distribution of local ethnic, Bugis philosophical narratives on Twitter. The spread is influenced due to the number of tweets and the number of followers, which affects the spread of narratives related to sipakatau (mutual respect), sipakainge (advice to each other), and sipakalebbi (glorify each other).



Graph 3: Comparison of the number of Twitter Followers by Candidate's Official Account.

Source: Content Analysis (2018)

Graph 3 shows that the core aspects of influence and the spread of narratives about the ethics of political campaigns with a Bugis philosophical approach are heavily supported by the number of Tweets. Tweets can quickly affect the spread of information (Baharuddin et al., 2021; Gruzd & Mai, 2020). The number of tweets (34%) on Twitter comes from the Ichsan Yasin Limpo account (@IYasinLimpo). This trend is in line with previous findings (Graph 2), which placed Ichsan Yasin Limpo as a candidate who influenced the distribution of Bugis philosophical narratives on Twitter. Based on this trend, it is known that a high number of followers is not

a determining aspect in influencing the level of narrative distribution of *sipakatau* (mutual respect), *sipakainge* (advice each other), and *sipakalebbe* (glorify each other).

The findings indicate that all candidates have the same opportunity to influence discussions in digital space, but the candidate who posts a large number of Tweets will become more dominant in influencing the attitudes of voters to join the movement spreading the values of Bugis philosophy. The joint effort to campaign for moral values associated with the philosophy of the Bugis people in South Sulawesi is also considered an effort to anticipate the occurrence of a black or negative campaign. The emergence of a black campaign and a negative campaign became a reflection of the dilapidated morale of the Indonesian people today, especially the ethnic Bugis, which is known as a society that adheres to its philosophy, such as *sipakatau*, *sipakainge*, and *sipakalebbe*. It cannot be denied that the black campaign had a very bad impact on the political education of the Indonesian people. The impact of negative campaigns will affect perceptions, voter turnout, participation, mobilization, polarization, and the holding of general elections (Martin, 2004; Kastolani, 2020; Maier & Nai, 2021).

Currently, there are many cases of negative campaigns carried out via social media during elections, including Indonesia, for instance, which published negative posts and even used Twitter to make personal attacks.

Hate speech from the negative campaign during a campaign contains narratives of insults and intimidation of political opponents (Bajari et al., 2021). This certainly disturbs the idea of peaceful democratization. Focusing on the data in this article, it is important to accommodate other possible efforts that can bind the diverse community tightly with an ethical approach of moral values from ancestors, such as the Bugis philosophy in South Sulawesi. The Bugis philosophy can restore initial awareness to minimize negative campaigns.

Efforts shown on social media by candidates and voters by distributing information based on narratives about *sipakatau* (mutual respect), *sipakainge* (advice to each other), and *sipakalebbe* (glorify each other) are considered as good as efforts to initiate a change in moral awareness on Twitter to reduce the possibilities and impacts of negative campaigns in the general election. The flow of information on Twitter has the potential to influence the attitudes of the general public in the public sphere, and this is highly dependent on the consistency of the candidates in using social media to spread messages related to the values contained in the Bugis philosophy for the ethics of political campaigns and democratization.

3.3 The Implications of the Emergence of Local Ethnic, Bugis Philosophical Narratives on for Digital Democracy

Apart from many general elections held in South Sulawesi in vulnerable areas (red zone), the stigma changed slowly in the 2018 elections. This fact is identified through the results of South Sulawesi's achievements, which are classified in the top three regions for organizing the best regional head elections in Indonesia (Diskominfo, 2018). This trend is certainly based on many things, including the efforts of the General Elections Commission, the General Elections Supervisory Agency, and the commitment of candidates and voters. The commitment of candidates and the voting community is considered important in reconstructing and minimizing trends that could lead to conflicts, disputes, and violations during the election. If there is no clear commitment from the candidate and the electorate, it can only make matters worse. The commitment of candidates and voters to maintain stability during the election is also an important aspect to continue to minimize actions that tend to violate election ethics, especially in political campaigns. The commitment of the candidates can be judged by the content of the campaign carried out during the election period. The content includes narratives that have high social attachment in the voting community in the region. In the case of the 2018 gubernatorial election in South Sulawesi, narratives with a high level of social attachment were traced with Bugis philosophy, which recognizes the terms *sipakatau* (mutual respect), *sipakainge* (advice each other), and *sipakalebbe* (glorify each other). The three terms in the philosophy of the Bugis society in South Sulawesi contributed to a stable political condition. The campaign, including several narratives of Bugis philosophy by the candidates, can reduce nondemocratic actions. The political campaign model, by carrying out values that have high social attachment in the voting community, is also considered to have implications for the achievement of South Sulawesi, which is classified as one of the best regional head election organizers in Indonesia (Diskominfo, 2018). The commitment of candidates and voters to political stability during the election is not only carried out in public spaces but also transformed in digital spaces such as Twitter. The use of social media by candidates and voters has a positive relationship. First, candidates can publish their political campaigns quickly and at a low cost and reach a wider audience. This claim has previously been found in many other research results that consider social networks to be able to minimize large expenditures, provide easier access, rapid information diffusion, and wide reach (Tajudeen et al., 2018; Kumar & Sinha, 2021; Ohme, 2019).

The use of social media among politicians or candidates and the responses of the public have the potential to accelerate the flow of information. This tendency will influence other users to get involved in campaigning for relevant issues in accordance with the existing socio-cultural aspects, thus creating high social engagement in the voting community in general in South Sulawesi, especially with the Bugis philosophy approach (*sipakatau*, *sipakainge* *sipakalebbe*).

Based on the findings of this research, it appears that political campaigns that contain narratives of Bugis philosophy by candidates on social media helped to spread the narratives to other social media users to maintain

the ethics of political campaigns and democratization. The new trend in discussing and spreading narratives about Bugis philosophy that followed the general public of South Sulawesi on social media is considered sustainable in terms of contributing to the idea of developing digital democracy. It is seen from the change in perspective of the candidates and the voting community in maximizing the use of social media such as Twitter to disseminate more ethical information or a narrative campaign with a *sipakatau* (mutual respect), *sipakainge* (advice each other), and *sipakalebbi* (glorify each other). The idea of developing digital democracy will be more visible if the democratization process contains several supporting elements, including transformation to maximize the prospect of digitization, such as social networks (Saud & Margono, 2021; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2010).

4. Conclusions

The ethics of political campaigns are not only discussed in the public sphere but also transformed into digital spaces such as Twitter. This transformation requires the candidates and the voting community to maximize the use of Twitter naturally.

The use of social networks among candidates and voters led to a reconstruction of narratives that are more binding in online social networks to be stronger by initiating a socio-cultural approach through the moral values contained in the Bugis philosophy, which is popular among the people of South Sulawesi. These philosophies include *sipakatau* (mutual respect), *sipakainge* (advice to each other), and *sipakalebbi* (mutual honouring). The use of Twitter to discuss and spread narratives around the philosophy of Bugis (*sipakatau*, *sipakainge*, *sipakalebbi*) that adhered to the ethnic Bugis in South Sulawesi has contributed to the idea of *developing* digital democracy.

The limitation of this study is that the research method relies on Twitter for data collection, so it is recommended that future research should take into account other social media platforms. It would be useful for more complex studies in the future.

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About The Authors



Syukri is a lecturer at the Faculty of Communication Science, Muhammadiyah University Makassar. Now he is a student of a Doctoral degree at Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia.



Dadang Rahmat Hidayat is a lecturer and Dean at the Faculty of Communication Science, Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia. An activist on campus and off campus, he is an administrator for several organizations, including the West Java FKPP, Deputy Chairperson of the West Java KNPI, Chair of the West Java KPI, and Chair of the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI).



Atwar Bajari is a lecturer at the Faculty of Communication Science, Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia. Member of the Association of the College of Communication (ASPIKOM Indonesia) since 2009 till now. Researching the media, protection of children, family, and gender, for almost 19 years in His faculty and Padjadjaran University. Working as a volunteer for UNICEF in the preparation of a report on child protection in Indonesia. Books that are published are *The Contextual Communications* (2011) and *Street Children, Communication and Social Behavior Dynamics of Deviant Children* (2012).



Hafied Cangara is a lecturer, Writer, and Researcher at Hasanuddin University with a particular interest in communication. Obtained bachelor's degree (Drs) in Publication Department, Hasanuddin University (1976), Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Educational Communication Technology (1987), and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Communication Planning (1995) from in College of Development Communication, University of the Philippines. Professor (Professor) in the field of Communication Studies (2002).



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