# Ethical Political Education in the Digital Era: Challenges and Opportunities in Indonesia

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**Abstract**

The development of digital technology has changed the political landscape of Indonesia, creating opportunities and challenges in ethical political education. This study analyzes the implementation of ethical political education in Indonesia's digital era with a focus on its challenges and opportunities. Based on a literature study with a qualitative approach, this study explores the phenomenon of filter bubbles, digital literacy, and the integration of Pancasila values in forming ethical digital citizens. Data from the Ministry of Communication and Information shows that more than 100 thousand negative content was spread on social media in 2023, while Indonesia's digital literacy index in 2022 was still at a moderate level (3.54). The findings show that political education faces significant challenges due to the filter bubble and echo chamber phenomena that strengthen polarization and hinder constructive dialogue. The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach in civic education has proven effective in increasing students' political awareness, but the implementation of Pancasila values in the curriculum is still uneven. Ethical political education requires a collaborative strategy between educational institutions, government, and civil society to design policies and programs that are responsive to digital dynamics. Recommendations include the integration of digital literacy and political ethics in the formal curriculum, the development of teacher training programs, increasing public awareness of the dangers of filter bubbles, and a holistic approach in teaching Pancasila values. With the implementation of this strategy, ethical political education is expected to form citizens who are critical, responsible, and have integrity in facing the complexities of digital democracy.

*Keywords:* Digital era, digital literacy, ethical political education, filter bubble, Pancasila values

## 1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has revolutionized various aspects of life, including in the political realm. In Indonesia, this transformation has had a significant impact on the way people access information, participate in political discourse, and shape public opinion. Social media, as one of the main products of the digital era, has become a new public space that facilitates the massive and rapid exchange of political ideas and opinions.

However, this easy access to information also brings its own challenges. The rampant spread of hoaxes, disinformation, and hate speech on digital platforms threatens the quality of democracy and social cohesion. According to data from the Ministry of Communication and Information, in 2023 there will be more than 100 thousand negative content spread on social media, including hoaxes and hate speech (Andrina, 2024). This phenomenon shows the urgency of political education that is not only informative, but also ethical.

Ethical political education is crucial in equipping citizens, especially the younger generation, with critical and moral skills in responding to political dynamics in the digital era. Generation Z, who were born and raised in a digital environment, have unique characteristics in accessing and processing information. However, they are also vulnerable to information manipulation and opinion polarization. Therefore, political education must be designed to develop strong digital literacy and political ethics (Hernandez-de-Menendez et al., 2020; Szymkowiak et al., 2021).

One of the main challenges in political education in the digital era is the phenomenon of "filter bubbles" and "echo chambers", where individuals tend to be exposed to information that is in line with their own views. This can hinder understanding of diverse perspectives and strengthen political polarization. Ethical political education must be able to encourage open-mindedness and dialogue between groups with different views (Figà Talamanca & Arfini, 2022).

On the other hand, the digital era also offers great opportunities to strengthen political education. The use of digital technology can increase accessibility and interactivity in the political learning process. E-learning platforms, mobile

applications, and social media can be used to deliver political education materials in an interesting and relevant way to the daily lives of the younger generation (Nwafor & Osuji, 2021).

The integration of Pancasila values in political education is also an important aspect in forming political ethics that are in accordance with the Indonesian context. Values such as justice, democracy, and humanity must be instilled from an early age through an adaptive and contextual curriculum. This will help the younger generation make responsible political decisions based on national values (Ramadhan et al., 2025).

In addition, digital literacy is a key competency in facing the challenges of the digital era. The ability to identify valid information, understand the political context, and participate constructively in online political discourse must be an integral part of political education. Digital literacy training programs and workshops can be an effective strategy in increasing this capacity among students and college students (Levy et al. 2025).

The role of educational institutions, government, and civil society is very important in supporting the implementation of ethical political education. Collaboration between stakeholders is needed to design policies, curricula, and programs that are responsive to digital dynamics and the needs of the younger generation. An inclusive and participatory approach will ensure that ethical political education can be implemented effectively and sustainably. In this regard, this study aims to analyze the challenges and opportunities in the implementation of ethical political education in the digital era in Indonesia. Using a qualitative approach and literature study, this study will explore strategies that can be applied to optimize ethical political education, as well as identify factors that support and hinder the process. It is hoped that the results of this study can contribute to the development of policies and practices of political education that are adaptive to the digital era, as well as forming a young generation that is not only politically literate, but also has integrity and responsibility in national and state life.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Ethical Political Education in the Context of Digital Citizenship

Ethical political education in the digital era emphasizes the formation of citizens who are not only literate in information but also aware of their moral responsibilities when participating in the public digital sphere. In an age where political discourse is often shaped by online interactions, it is crucial that citizens are taught how to engage ethically, critically, and constructively. Digital citizenship education seeks to cultivate responsible online behavior, including respecting differing political opinions, avoiding the spread of misinformation, and promoting digital civility.

The concept of digital citizenship extends beyond technical skills or access to the internet; it includes developing a moral compass that guides one's political engagement online. Milenkova and Lendzhova (2021) highlight that digital citizenship education must embed political ethics to prepare the younger generation to navigate and influence digital platforms responsibly. However, in many educational settings, political ethics are still taught separately from digital skills, leading to a fragmented understanding of what it means to be an ethical digital citizen. There is a growing need to integrate these components into a cohesive framework that reflects current digital realities.

### 2.2. The Filter Bubble and Echo Chamber Phenomenon in Political Discourse

The phenomena of filter bubbles and echo chambers present considerable obstacles to the cultivation of ethical political understanding. Social media platforms often use algorithms that curate content based on users' previous interactions and preferences, resulting in an informational environment where users are predominantly exposed to content that confirms their existing beliefs. This selective exposure restricts access to diverse viewpoints and hinders the development of critical thinking, especially among younger digital citizens.

Research by Widodo and Kristiyono (2025) found that in Indonesia, these phenomena exacerbate political polarization and weaken efforts to build a democratic culture of dialogue. People tend to group themselves into ideologically homogeneous communities where dissenting opinions are either ignored or actively rejected. The result is an erosion of public discourse and a rise in intolerance toward differing political perspectives. Addressing these effects requires more than just media literacy; it demands a rethinking of how political education engages with digital structures to foster more open and inclusive conversations.

### 2.3. Digital Literacy as the Foundation of Ethical Political Education

Digital literacy forms the foundation of ethical political education in the digital age. It encompasses the ability to access, evaluate, and use digital information effectively and ethically. In the context of political discourse, digital literacy enables individuals to detect misinformation, recognize bias, and participate constructively in online civic life. Without sufficient digital literacy, citizens are more vulnerable to manipulation, disinformation, and unethical digital practices.

According to Bulya and Izzati (2024), Indonesia's digital literacy index in 2022 stood at a moderate level of 3.54, indicating room for significant improvement. This average reflects not only technical skill gaps but also deficiencies in ethical reasoning and civic engagement within digital spaces. Incorporating digital literacy into political education

is essential to empower individuals with the critical competencies needed to evaluate sources, engage respectfully in political discussions, and make informed decisions in a democratic society. Therefore, educators and policymakers must work together to elevate digital literacy from a technical skill to a core component of ethical political engagement.

## 2.4. Integration of Pancasila Values in Political Education

Pancasila, Indonesia's foundational philosophical doctrine, offers core values such as justice, democracy, and humanity that can serve as ethical anchors in political education. Integrating these values into the curriculum not only fosters national identity but also instills a moral framework appropriate to Indonesia's cultural and political context. Political education rooted in Pancasila emphasizes collective welfare, tolerance, and dialogue—principles that are urgently needed in today's fragmented digital space.

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach has proven to be an effective method for integrating Pancasila values into civic and political education. As demonstrated by Nurjaman and Budimansyah (2022), this pedagogical model helps students connect theoretical concepts with real-life experiences, making political ethics more relevant and meaningful. In the context of digital citizenship, the CTL approach can encourage learners to apply Pancasila values when interacting online, thus shaping behavior that supports harmony and civic responsibility in digital environments.

## 2.5. Collaborative Strategy in Implementing Ethical Political Education

Implementing ethical political education in the digital era requires more than curricular reform; it necessitates collaboration among schools, government institutions, civil society, and the digital industry. These stakeholders play complementary roles in shaping the ethical norms of digital citizenship. Schools provide the foundational knowledge and moral education; government institutions offer regulatory support; civil society advocates for inclusivity and accountability; and the digital industry influences user behavior through platform design and content moderation.

Isdendi et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of collaborative strategies in moral education for a generation immersed in technology. Coordinated efforts can help bridge the gap between formal education and real-world digital practices. For example, partnerships between schools and technology companies can create media literacy programs tailored to specific platforms, while collaboration with civil society organizations can ensure that political education is responsive to local needs and cultural contexts. Such multi-stakeholder engagement is key to fostering a digitally literate and ethically responsible generation of Indonesian citizens.

## 3. Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature study type. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for exploring complex socio-political phenomena, such as ethical political education in the context of the digital era. Qualitative research allows researchers to explore the meanings, values, and processes underlying the dynamics of political education, with a focus on an in-depth understanding of the challenges and opportunities that arise in the Indonesian context. The type of literature study was chosen because the data used comes from secondary documents such as scientific journal articles, books, official institutional reports, and policy publications that are relevant to the issues of political education, digital literacy, and digital citizenship.

### 3.1. Data Sources and Data Collection Techniques

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, specifically employing a literature review design. This approach is appropriate for examining complex socio-political phenomena, such as ethical political education in the digital age, where values, norms, and narratives play a central role. Qualitative research allows for the exploration of meaning-making processes and the contextual factors that influence policy and practice in digital political education.

The literature review method was chosen because the research is grounded in secondary data sources, including peer-reviewed academic journal articles, books, government policy reports, and international publications. These sources provide a comprehensive overview of theoretical frameworks, empirical studies, and policy debates relevant to the intersection of political education, digital literacy, and digital citizenship in Indonesia.

### 3.2. Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis in this study employs thematic analysis, a method commonly used in qualitative research to identify, analyze, and report patterns within data. The analysis began with close reading of all collected literature, followed by the organization of key concepts into major themes aligned with the study's focus. These themes included ethical political education in digital citizenship, the impact of filter bubbles and echo chambers, the role of digital literacy, the integration of Pancasila values, and collaborative strategies for implementation.

The researcher then examined the relationships between these themes and synthesized insights to form a coherent narrative about the current state and future direction of ethical political education in Indonesia. This analytical process allowed for both a critical and comprehensive understanding of how different components interact and influence each other in shaping the political education landscape in the digital era.

### 3.3. Data Validity

To ensure the credibility and accuracy of the findings, source triangulation was employed. This involved cross-referencing information from various types of literature, including academic articles, policy documents, and empirical reports. Triangulation helped confirm the reliability of key themes and reduce the risk of researcher bias or misinterpretation.

Furthermore, the study employed a critical evaluation of sources to assess their academic rigor, relevance, and recency. Only trusted publications and official data sources were included in the analysis. In-text citations and a comprehensive reference list were maintained to ensure transparency and traceability, reinforcing the validity of the study's findings and conclusions.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Ethical Political Education in the Context of Digital Citizenship

The literature review reveals that while there have been efforts to promote ethical political education in Indonesia, especially within the context of digital citizenship, these efforts remain uneven and underdeveloped. Many educational institutions lack structured curricula that specifically address the intersection of digital literacy and political ethics. As a result, students may receive fragmented or inconsistent messages about responsible political behavior online.

Milenkova and Lendzhova (2021) stress the importance of incorporating ethical awareness into digital citizenship education, yet in the Indonesian context, this integration is often limited to general civic education without digital emphasis. Schools often prioritize basic ICT skills without embedding ethical dimensions of political discourse. This finding highlights the urgent need to revamp civic education programs to reflect the realities of digital interaction and to prepare young citizens to navigate political participation responsibly in online spaces.

### 4.2. The Filter Bubble and Echo Chamber Phenomena in Political Discourse

The prevalence of filter bubbles and echo chambers in Indonesia's digital political discourse presents a formidable challenge to ethical political education. Algorithms designed to personalize content often reinforce users' existing beliefs, leading to digital isolation and reduced exposure to alternative viewpoints. This situation fosters political polarization and weakens the ability to engage in balanced, constructive debate.

Sihombing et al. (2024) found that the echo chamber effect significantly contributes to social division and antagonism between ideological groups, especially during election periods or political controversies. Wulandari et al. (2021) also observed that such algorithmic patterns influence user behavior by promoting confirmation bias and limiting opportunities for dialogue. To counter these effects, political education must include media literacy components that help students recognize and critically engage with the content they encounter online, thereby reducing susceptibility to polarization and misinformation.

### 4.3. Digital Literacy as the Foundation of Ethical Political Education

Digital literacy is a key competency in facing the challenges of the digital era. The ability to identify valid information, understand the political context, and participate constructively in online political discourse must be an integral part of political education. According to a survey by the Ministry of Communication and Information, Indonesia's digital literacy index in 2022 was at a moderate level, namely 3.54, indicating the need for improvement in this aspect (Bulya & Izzati, 2024). Visualization can be seen in Figure 1 below.
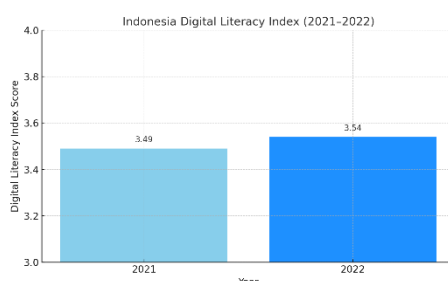


**Figure 1**: Indonesia digital literacy index 2022

## 4.4. Integration of Pancasila Values in Political Education

The integration of Pancasila values such as justice, democracy, and humanity into political education is essential for shaping political ethics that align with Indonesia's philosophical and cultural identity. As the foundational ideology of the Indonesian state, Pancasila embodies moral principles that are not only relevant to governance but also to the daily conduct of citizens. Embedding these values in political education ensures that learners are not merely passive recipients of political knowledge but are actively encouraged to reflect on how national ideals guide their civic behavior, especially in the increasingly complex digital age.

Incorporating these values also provides a counterbalance to the often polarizing and fragmented nature of political discourse found on digital platforms. By emphasizing collective well-being, tolerance, and democratic participation, Pancasila-based political education can foster a generation of citizens who are critical yet respectful, active yet ethical in their engagement both offline and online. This approach helps address the moral and civic gaps that may arise from unfiltered exposure to digital content and political propaganda.

One pedagogical model that has shown promise in this context is the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach. This model emphasizes the connection between academic material and real-world experiences, allowing students to see the relevance of civic and political concepts in their everyday lives. In the context of civic education, CTL enables students to understand abstract values like justice or democracy by applying them in real or simulated social scenarios, such as group discussions, community service, or classroom debates.

Research by Nurjaman and Budimansyah (2022) found that the CTL approach is particularly effective in raising students' political awareness in the digital era. Through CTL, students not only grasp the theoretical basis of Pancasila values but also learn how to apply them in navigating political information online, engaging in respectful digital conversations, and participating responsibly in virtual civic spaces. This educational method thus serves as both a moral compass and a practical toolkit for building ethical digital citizenship grounded in Indonesian values.

## 4.5. Collaborative Strategy in Implementing Ethical Political Education

The implementation of ethical political education requires collaboration between educational institutions, government, and civil society. A study by Isdendi et al. (2022) emphasizes the importance of a collaborative strategy in teaching moral and ethical values to a generation growing up with technology. Through education, collaboration, and continuous improvement, Indonesia seeks to realize the ethical potential of its citizens in the digital realm. The challenges and strategies of ethical political education in the digital era can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1**: Challenges and strategies of ethical political education in the digital era

| Challenges | Strategy |
|---|---|
| Spread of hoaxes and disinformation | Increase digital literacy through training and workshops |
| Polarization due to filter bubbles and echo chambers | Encourage open and inclusive dialogue on digital platforms |
| Lack of integration of Pancasila values in the curriculum | Develop contextual curriculum that internalizes Pancasila values |
| Limited collaboration between stakeholders | Build partnerships between government, educational institutions, and civil society |

Table 1 functions as a conceptual synthesis that connects the primary challenges of implementing ethical political education in Indonesia's digital context with actionable strategies. This table serves not only to summarize the issues but also to offer practical recommendations based on empirical studies and educational policy considerations.

## 4.6. Implementation of Pancasila Values in Indonesian Schools in The Hague

A study by Wicaksana (2024) on the teaching of *Pancasila* in Indonesian schools in The Hague reveals that, although efforts have been made to instill Pancasila values among students, the methods employed often rely heavily on rote memorization and the use of standardized textbooks. In such contexts, students are typically expected to recall definitions and historical facts about Pancasila rather than engage critically with its principles or reflect on their application in daily life. This approach may lead to a superficial understanding of Pancasila, where the values are seen more as abstract concepts rather than living ideals that guide civic behavior and ethical decision-making.

The findings underscore a larger issue within the pedagogical model: the lack of opportunities for students to question, analyze, and relate Pancasila values to real-world challenges—especially those shaped by globalization, digital communication, and cultural pluralism. As Indonesian students increasingly live in multicultural environments, both domestically and abroad, it becomes essential that Pancasila education moves beyond didactic instruction and embraces a more dynamic, participatory learning process.

A more holistic and interactive approach to teaching Pancasila would involve integrating methods such as dialogue-based learning, case studies, project-based assignments, and digital citizenship training. These methods encourage students to connect values like democracy, justice, and humanity with contemporary issues such as online

hate speech, political polarization, or cultural tolerance in diverse societies. Rather than passively receiving moral instruction, students become active participants in value formation and ethical reasoning.

Furthermore, in a globalized setting like The Hague, where Indonesian students are exposed to multiple cultural frameworks, a more reflective and adaptive approach to Pancasila education can serve as a bridge between national identity and global citizenship. By encouraging critical engagement with Pancasila, educators can help students understand how national values can coexist with, and even enhance, cross-cultural understanding and democratic participation in an interconnected world.

## 4.7. Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings above, several policy recommendations that can be considered include:
a) Integrating digital literacy and political ethics into the formal education curriculum.
b) Developing training programs for teachers to teach Pancasila values contextually and interactively.
c) Encouraging collaboration between the government, educational institutions, and civil society in designing and implementing ethical political education programs.
d) Raising public awareness of the dangers of filter bubbles and echo chambers through educational campaigns.

By implementing these strategies, it is hoped that ethical political education in Indonesia can be more effective in forming critical, responsible, and integrity citizens in the digital era.

## 5. Conclussion

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that ethical political education in the digital era is an urgent need for Indonesia considering the increasing challenges such as the spread of hoaxes, disinformation, and the filter bubble phenomenon that threatens the quality of democracy. Research shows that digital literacy is an important foundation, but Indonesia's digital literacy index in 2022 only reached a moderate level (3.54), indicating the need for increased capacity. The integration of Pancasila values in political education is crucial to form political ethics that are appropriate to the Indonesian context, with the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach proven to be effective in increasing students' political awareness. The main challenges include polarization due to social media algorithms, the lack of integration of Pancasila values in the curriculum, and limited collaboration between stakeholders. To overcome this, a collaborative strategy is needed between educational institutions, government, and civil society in designing policies and curricula that are responsive to digital dynamics. A holistic and interactive approach to teaching Pancasila values must be developed, accompanied by an educational campaign to increase public awareness of the dangers of filter bubbles and echo chambers, so that it can form critical, responsible, and integrity-based citizens in the digital era.

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