



JAMBURA JOURNAL CIVIC EDUCATION
<http://ejurnal.ung.ac.id/index.php./jacedu>
E-ISSN : 2798-4818
P-ISSN: 2808-2249

Social Cohesion with Digital Platforms to Realise a Good Social Society

Kohesi Sosial dengan Platform Digital untuk Mewujudkan Masyarakat Sosial yang Baik

A.Ramli Rasjid¹, Intan Roudhatul Jannah², Andi Shafwan Al Khabir³,
Shabila Salwa D⁴, Mohammad Randi⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5}Fakultas Teknik, Universitas Negeri Makassar

(ramlirasyid@unm.ac.id)

(andisaf@gmail.com)

(intanroudhatuljannah24@gmail.com)

(shabilasala@gmail.com)

(mohammadrandi@gmail.com)

Article Info

History of the article:

Accepted (oct) (2024)

Approved (nov) (2024)

Published (nov) (2024)

Keywords:

Social cohesion, digital platforms, citizenship, innovative strategies, social networks, digital initiatives

Abstract

Digital platforms are not only remodeling the way we interact but also offer new opportunities to build strong social cohesion. Analyzing various case studies and digital initiatives reveals how digital tools can expand social networks, deepen community participation, and instill constructive civic values. Through an exploration of innovative strategies and best practices, this article presents a practical guide to harnessing the power of digital platforms to create a more connected, engaged, and responsible society, thus making good citizens. The findings provide new perspectives on how technology can strengthen social fabric and advance quality citizenship in an increasingly connected world. This research aims to analyze the role of digital platforms in improving social cohesion by assessing the potential and challenges posed by using digital platforms such as social media, community apps, and online forums. Based on a survey of 50 respondents from campus and civilian populations, most people believe that digital platforms have great potential to strengthen relationships between individuals, expand social interactions, and increase solidarity within communities. However, the main challenges identified were social polarisation, the spread of misinformation, and the technology access gap that still exists in some communities. The findings emphasize the importance of thoughtful moderation policies, digital literacy education, and efforts to reduce social divides to maximize the positive potential of digital platforms. With the right approach, digital platforms can build a more inclusive and harmonious social society, which supports social cohesion among individuals and groups. This research provides important insights for policymakers and society on how to utilize digital technologies positively and constructively.

INTRODUCTION

Social media plays a vital role in shaping how we interact and communicate. Marry Tablot (2017) explains that 'Cohesion on social media is often built through the use of interconnected textual elements, such as hashtags

and mentions, which tie content into a wider network of meaning. This helps users to interact more effectively and organize information within the digital platform.' With its ability to connect individuals from different backgrounds and locations, social media can effectively build social Cohesion. Social Cohesion, which includes bonds of solidarity, a sense of community, and integration between individuals, is essential in creating a harmonious society. Social media enables active participation in public discussions, wide dissemination of information, and collaboration in various community initiatives.

Social media has become integral to our lives and profoundly influences community cohesion. 'Social media can strengthen social cohesion by providing a platform for discussion and interaction that connects individuals with the wider community, supporting the development of solid social relationships.' (Hunsinger, 2020, p. 112), This quote shows the importance of using social media wisely to achieve positive results. Here are the types of social media that are popular in Indonesia, sorted by the number of users, and how they can be used to bring people together:

WhatsApp has revolutionised digital communication by providing a platform that enables real-time interaction and easy media sharing around the world.' (McCormick, 2019). In the quote WhatsApp allows real-time communication within groups, making it ideal for organising social activities, disseminating important information, and building a sense of solidarity within communities, so the WhatsApp application itself is well suited in building Cohesion through the features provided. Facebook: According to David Kirkpatrick (2010) in his book, Facebook reached the peak of popularity and *hype*, especially in the initial period of its launch, during the IPO, and during the global expansion and continuous innovation that made it the leading social media platform in the world. 'With features such as groups and community pages, Facebook provides a space for individuals to connect and collaborate, which supports the formation and maintenance of social cohesion in society.' (Johnson, 2019, p. 78) Facebook can build social Cohesion by providing spaces for sharing different types of content, such as statuses, photos, videos, and group and event features. Through groups focused on specific interests or goals, users can connect

with others with something in common, strengthening their social network. The features of comments, likes, and direct messages facilitate interaction and discussion, creating a deep sense of community and connectedness.

Instagram allows users to share visual content, such as photos and videos, that reflect their interests and experiences. Through features such as Stories, Reels, and hashtags, users can connect with communities of like-minded people, strengthening social connections through direct interaction in comments and messages. Collaboration features and virtual events also expand opportunities to create a sense of community and connectedness among users. YouTube: According to Jennifer Aaker & Naomi Bagdonas (2019), YouTube is a powerful platform for building social Cohesion by providing features that facilitate interaction and collaboration between individuals. Through the ability to upload and share videos, users can express their stories and experiences, allowing people from different backgrounds to understand and connect. The comments feature enables constructive discussions, while the option to like and share videos reinforces positive interactions within the community. In addition, YouTube Live allows for the organization of real-time events, encouraging live participation from the audience and creating a sense of community. With community channels, users can build closer and more collaborative relationships, making YouTube a place to share content and an essential tool for strengthening social networks and creating unity in society. It provides a video-sharing platform that allows users to access content relevant to their interests and hobbies. Viral videos often unite people with similar interests, creating community and user connections.

TikTok can build social Cohesion by providing a platform to share engaging content and motivate interaction. Through challenges, trends, and viral videos, TikTok connects users with similar interests and cultures, creating a sense of community and connectedness. In addition, TikTok facilitates collaboration and discussion between users, strengthening social relationships across different groups. Twitter can build social Cohesion by allowing users to share thoughts, news, and opinions in a short tweet format. Features such as retweets likes, and replies facilitate discussion and interaction between users,

forming communities around specific topics or issues. Through trends and hashtags, Twitter also brings together people with similar interests, allowing them to engage in real-time global conversations.

Telegram builds social Cohesion by providing a space for intensive communication through large groups and channels. Users can easily share messages, media, and information within communities of specific interests or goals. Features such as bots and channels allow for more organized and efficient interactions, strengthening relationships between members by facilitating discussion, collaboration, and wide dissemination of information. Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze the role of digital platforms in strengthening social cohesion in society by assessing the potential and challenges posed by using digital platforms such as social media, community applications, and online forums.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the research on Social Cohesion with Digital Platforms to Realise a Good Social Society, a qualitative approach was used to explore the experiences, perceptions, and patterns of social interaction formed through digital platforms. Researchers interviewed several campus residents who use digital platforms to understand their experiences building social relationships, both positively and negatively. This interview provided space for participants to describe their experiences, so the data obtained was more in-depth and personalized. The researcher directly observed how individuals interact in digital groups or communities. Through this approach, researchers can see the dynamics of communication, solidarity, or even conflict that occur on digital platforms.

In this article, qualitative research allows researchers to uncover how digital platforms play a dual role- both as a tool to strengthen social cohesion and as an obstacle to healthy social relationships. Therefore, it is essential to understand the potential positive and negative impacts that can arise and create strategies that can enhance healthy social interactions and build a better society through digital platforms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research on Social Cohesion with Digital Platforms to Realise a Good Social Society shows various vital findings on how digital platforms affect social interaction and cohesion. Based on the qualitative method applied, here are some of the main results of this research:

The following are the data results from the questionnaire of 50 answers regarding the Positive Role of Digital Platforms in Strengthening Social Cohesion

Sejauh mana Anda merasa platform digital membantu memperkuat hubungan sosial dan membangun solidaritas antar individu dalam komunitas Anda?

50 jawaban

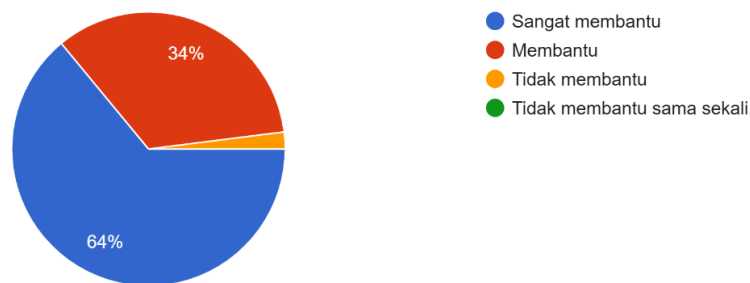


Figure 1. The Positive Role of Digital Platforms in Strengthening Social Cohesion

Among the 50 answers, 66.7% chose very helpful, and 31.1% chose 'helpful,' which means that digital platforms, according to people who use social media and other digital platforms, can help strengthen social relationships and build solidarity between individuals and a community. The research shows that digital platforms, such as social media, online discussion groups, and community-based applications, can potentially strengthen social cohesion. Some of the key findings include:

- **Increased Solidarity within Communities:** Social media allows individuals with similar interests or goals to come together, discuss, and support each other. For example, online groups formed around health, education, or social awareness topics can help strengthen relationships between members of these communities.
- **Wider Access to Information:** Digital platforms allow access to faster and broader information, which increases social awareness and participation in

important issues. This can strengthen the sense of community and encourage individuals to be more active in supporting social change.

- **Formation of Stronger Social Networks:** Digital platforms can strengthen social connections beyond physical boundaries, allowing people to stay connected despite being separated by geographical distance. This encourages the formation of more inclusive and supportive social networks.

Adverse Effects of Digital Platforms on Social Cohesion

Apakah Anda merasa bahwa penggunaan platform digital memperburuk hubungan sosial antar kelompok atau menyebabkan polarisasi dalam masyarakat?

51 jawaban

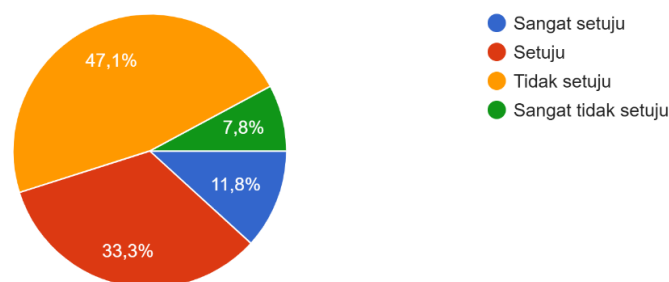


Figure 2: Negative Influence of Digital Platforms on Social Cohesion

On the other hand, this research also identified some challenges in building social cohesion through digital platforms. Around 47.1% of the public disagreed that digital platform users worsen social relations between groups or cause polarization. However, 11.8% of the 50 responses strongly agreed. Some of the findings related to the negative influence of digital platforms include:

- **Social Fragmentation:** Digital platforms can cause separation between social groups with different views. For example, on social media, algorithms often amplify interactions within existing groups, exacerbating social polarisation and widening the gap between various groups.
- **Spread of Misleading Information:** Research has also found that the spread of misinformation and hoaxes on digital platforms can damage social cohesion. Misleading or provocative content can worsen relations between groups and create distrust

- **Inequality of Digital Access:** Not everyone can access digital technologies equally. Inequality in access to digital platforms can exacerbate social inequality, with less digitally connected groups becoming isolated, hindering better social cohesion.

The Role of Moderation and Platform Policies in Enhancing Social Cohesion

Sejauh mana Anda merasa bahwa kebijakan moderasi yang diterapkan oleh platform digital membantu menjaga interaksi yang sehat dan mendukung kohesi sosial?

51 jawaban

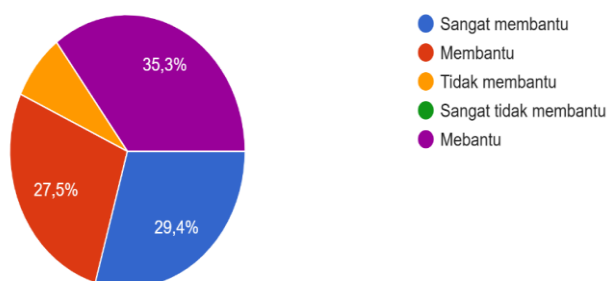


Figure 3. The Role of Platform Moderation and Policies in Promoting Social Cohesion

The research also highlighted the importance of moderation and policies implemented by digital platforms in ensuring that social interactions in digital spaces support good social cohesion, with 35.3% stating that it 'Helps.' Findings related to policies and moderation include. **Constructive Content Moderation:** Platforms with effective moderation systems can prevent the spread of hate, misinformation, and content that damages intergroup relations. This can create a more positive digital social space and support healthy social collaboration. **Increased Engagement of Government and Social Organizations:** The research also found that active government and social organization involvement in monitoring and educating on the use of digital technologies can increase awareness of the importance of building healthy social relationships online.

Utilization of Digital Platforms to Create a Good Social Society

Sejauh mana Anda percaya bahwa pemanfaatan platform digital dapat membantu menciptakan masyarakat yang lebih inklusif, saling mendukung, dan harmonis?

51 jawaban

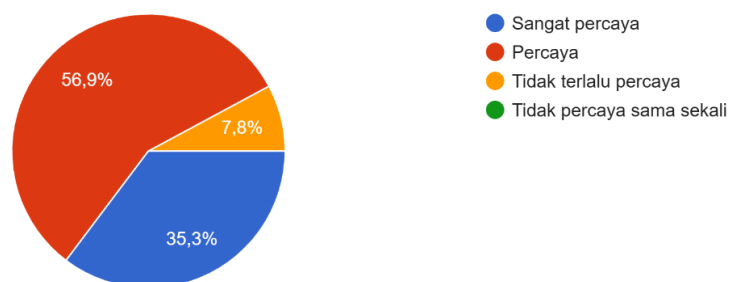


Figure. 4 Utilization of Digital Platforms to Create a Good Social Society

It is concluded from the public's responses regarding using digital platforms to realize a good social society that 56.9% 'believe.' The research also concluded that to learn a good social society, it is essential to balance the benefits and challenges of digital platforms. Some of the recommendations put forward in this research include:

- **Digital Education for Society:** Increased digital literacy among the public must ensure that digital platforms are used wisely and constructively to strengthen social relations and reduce negative impacts.
- **Inclusive Policies and Approaches:** Policy development that supports inclusivity and accessibility for all can minimize the digital divide and help create a more connected and harmonious society.

After obtaining answers from 49 community respondents, the results showed that most (more than 70%) respondents gave positive opinions on the role of digital platforms in strengthening social cohesion. Respondents believe that digital platforms have great potential to enhance relationships between individuals, expand access to information, and facilitate more inclusive and supportive social interactions. Overall, the results of this study indicate that while there are challenges in utilizing digital platforms to build social cohesion, with the

right approach and supportive policies, digital platforms can be a highly effective tool for creating a more connected, inclusive, and harmonious society.

1. Potential for Strengthening Social Cohesion

The majority of respondents agreed that digital platforms can strengthen relationships between individuals in various communities, especially by sharing useful information, introducing different ideas and opinions, and facilitating cooperation between groups with similar interests. Some respondents also revealed that they feel more connected to others who share similar views or interests and get emotional support from online communities.

2. Challenges Faced

Nonetheless, many respondents also identified challenges, such as spreading misinformation and harmful content that can damage social relations between groups. There are also concerns related to social segregation due to echo chambers on digital platforms, where individuals only interact with people who share similar views and ignore other viewpoints.

3. The Role of Moderation Policy and Digital Literacy

Most respondents expressed the importance of wise moderation policies on digital platforms to reduce negative impacts, such as spreading hatred or hoaxes. They also considered it essential to have broader digital literacy education for the public so platform users can use technology wisely and be more informed.

4. Digital Access and Inclusivity

Some respondents also highlighted the importance of reducing the digital divide by ensuring that all levels of society have equal access to technology. This is necessary so that the entire community can feel the benefits of digital platforms without exception.

The results of this study show that digital platforms have great potential to strengthen social cohesion but also present challenges that need to be addressed. For digital platforms to be optimally used to build a good social society, an approach that involves thoughtful moderation policies, digital literacy education, and efforts to reduce social inequalities associated with technology access is needed. Social cohesion can be better created if people can utilize the potential of

digital platforms positively and inclusively. To maximize the benefits of social media in strengthening social cohesion and promoting good citizenship, two key steps need to be taken : (1). Education and Moderation: Provide training on digital etiquette and strengthen moderation systems to keep discussions productive and free from hate speech. This helps create a safe and constructive environment for all users. (2). Collaboration and Data Analysis: Work with local organizations to leverage social media to promote community activities and use data analytics to understand community needs and trends to drive more effective and responsive strategies.

LITERATURE

- Benkler, Y., et al. (2018). *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Binns, A. (2019). *Cyberbullying: Its Nature and Impact on Society*. Routledge.
- Carr, Nicholas. (2010). *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*. New York: W. W. Norton
- Castells, Manuel. (2012). *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Christakis, Nicholas A., & Fowler, James H. (2009). *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- Fardouly, J., Diedrichs, P. C., Vartanian, L. R., & Halliwell, E. (2015). Social comparisons on social media: The impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood. *Body Image*, 13, 38-45.
- Givan, R. A. (2016). *Communicating in community: The role of social media in community engagement*. Routledge.
- Hilbert, M. (2011). *Digital Divide: The Internet and Social Inequality in International Perspective*. Springer.
- Hunsinger, C. N. (2020). "Digital media and social connectivity: Building social cohesion through online platforms". (hl. 112)

- Johnson, A. J. (2019). *Connecting communities: The role of Facebook in social cohesion*. Sage Publications.
- Kirkpatrick, D. (2010). *The Facebook effect: The inside story of the company that is connecting the world*. Simon & Schuster
- Kowalski, R. M., Giumetti, G. W., Schroeder, A. N., & Lattanner, M. R. (2014). *Bullying in the Digital Age: A Critical Review of the Role of Technology in Adolescent Bullying*. *Developmental Review*, 34(4), 378-407.
- McCormick, A. T. (2019). *The WhatsApp effect: How WhatsApp is transforming the way we communicate*.
- Papacharissi, Zizi. (2010). *A Private Sphere: Democracy in a Digital Age*. New York: Polity Press.
- Shirky, C. (2008). *Here comes everybody: The power of organizing without organizations*. Penguin Press.
- Sinek, S. (2009). *Start with why: How great leaders inspire everyone to take action*. Portfolio.E
- Talbot, M. (2017). *Discourse and digital practices: Doing discourse analysis in the digital age*. Routledge.
- Tiggemann, M., & Slater, A. (2014). NetGirls: The Internet, Facebook, and body image concern in adolescent girls. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 47(6), 630-643.
- Tufekci, Zeynep. (2017). *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Turkle, S. (2011). *Alone together: Why we expect more from technology and less from each other*. Basic Books.
- Van Dijk, J. (2020). *The Digital Divide: Perception and Reality*. Polity Press.
- Vogel, E. A., Rose, J. P., Roberts, L. D., & Eckles, K. (2014). Social comparison, social media, and self-esteem. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 3(4), 206-222.