The Role of Social Media in The Formation of Young People's Civic Identity: A Study on University Students in The Reform Era

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the role of social media in the construction of citizenship identity among students of the Social Studies Study Programme in the reform era. The transformation of information technology, especially the emergence and rapid development of social media, has influenced the way young people voice their identity and understand their position and responsibilities as citizens. This study was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on Tadris Social Studies students at the Cyber State Islamic University Sheikh Nurjati Cirebon. The selection of informants was done purposively, namely those who actively use social media and show concern for social, political and civic issues. Data were collected through in-depth interview techniques and digital observation of students' behaviour and activities on social media platforms. The findings of this study indicate that social media does not solely function as a medium for entertainment and social interaction, but also as a space for learning and reflection that encourages the growth of critical attitudes and awareness of civic values. However, the existence of false information (hoaxes), hate speech and negative content still pose serious challenges that can hinder the process of citizenship identity formation. In this context, strengthening digital literacy is a strategic element that must be considered so that students are able to utilise the media.

Keywords: Civic Identity, Digital Literacy, Reformation Era, Social Media, Young Generation.

1. Introduction

The development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has significantly influenced how humans establish communication and relate to one another, shaping identity in today's society. Social media, as one of the main results of this development, has become an important place for young people to express themselves, communicate, and build their social and civic identity. Social media and other digital platforms are not merely communication tools and entertainment platforms, but serve as means for character formation, especially for the younger generation as active users of social media. Besides being able to form character, social media can also be applied for the formation of civic, social, and political identity. In this research, the object is students of Social Science Education (IPS) at UIN Cirebon. Thus, the younger generation has a very important role as active agents of change in using social media to form their civic identity.

With the characteristics of the Reform era that promote transparency and democracy, social media provides opportunities for Social Science students to actively engage in socio-political debates that affirm their position as critical and progressive citizens. The reform era in Indonesia, which began in 1998, opened up space for freedom of expression and broader access to information compared to previous periods. This situation has driven dynamic

development in social relations in the digital world, where social media becomes a strategic tool for young people, making its presence inseparable from the education process and character development of the younger generation.

For Social Science Education students, social media is not only utilized as a means of social interaction but also as a learning medium that enriches their understanding of citizenship concepts, rights and obligations as citizens, and responsibilities in community life. Nevertheless, the use of social media by young people in forming civic identity is not without various challenges. Therefore, it is important for Social Sciencestudents to improve their digital literacy skills to carefully select information and behave ethically in the digital world. Digital literacy becomes a fundamental ability that must be possessed so that social media can play a positive role in forming healthy and broad-minded civic identity. However, the role of social media in forming civic identity of young people also presents significant challenges. In this case, the spread of false information (hoaxes), hate speech, and radical content in digital spaces can threaten character integrity and national values (Mahadika et al., 2024). Therefore, education efforts and digital literacy improvement are urgently needed so that Social Science students can utilize social media wisely and responsibly. The development of digital literacy skills becomes the key that enables young people to face these challenges while utilizing social media for constructive and productive purposes. Currently, easy access to the internet, especially through social media, brings dual impacts for young people in the process of forming civic character based on Pancasila values. Social media has become a space for individuals to express ideas, views, and aspirations to a wider audience.

According to Yuniarto et al. (2022), in the contemporary era, the world is experiencing waves of change that occur very rapidly, deeply, and on a large scale. This phenomenon is a consequence of globalization currents that touch almost all aspects of life in various parts of the world, especially in the 21st century, which is also marked by the ongoing reform process in Indonesia. This reform has brought fundamental changes in various aspects of national and state life, making the importance of strengthening Pancasila's role as the state foundation increasingly urgent. This is especially needed to maintain national identity while strengthening national unity and integrity. Pancasila, with all its essential values, remains relevant and able to adapt to the times. Its values remain the main foundation in building national life. Therefore, strengthening Pancasila education must continue, especially for young people who have a strategic role in directing social media use to always align with Pancasila's noble values. Thus, the nation's future direction can be shaped based on national identity.

Rapid advances in information technology also raise concerns, especially regarding their impact on civic identity formation. These concerns grow when Pancasila values, which serve as the state foundation, begin to be marginalized in digital society life. Indonesia's national identity can be viewed from two perspectives: as state representation and as a manifestation of national unity (Hendrizal, 2020). From the state perspective, national identity is reflected through state symbols such as Pancasila, the motto Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, the national anthem Indonesia Raya, the Red and White Flag, the 1945 Constitution, and Indonesian as the unifying language, as well as national heroes as inseparable parts. Meanwhile, in the national context, identity includes aspects such as religion, tradition, moral values, ethnicity, and culture. The presence of social media currently provides convenience for society in accessing information from various corners of the world in a very short time. However, this convenience also contributes to decreasing awareness of national identity, especially among the millennial generation. If this condition is allowed to continue, it is not impossible that major problems will emerge in the future (Aprianti et al., 2022). Therefore, it is very important

to always remind that this nation was formed through the long struggle of heroes who sacrificed everything.

The role of social media in this context is very crucial, especially in forming civic identity of young people (Sidabutar et al., 2024). In this case study, Social Science Education students in the reform era are expected to utilize social media to strengthen their civic identity, so they not only become information consumers but also active agents of change in maintaining and developing national values. Yuniarto et al. (2022) states that amid globalization currents aligned with liberalism, amid the dominance of market systems characterized by capital power and economic freedom, as well as the influence of socialism characterized by full state intervention, Pancasila emerges as a unique and relevant ideological alternative. The uniqueness of Pancasila as an alternative ideology lies in several important aspects. First, Pancasila has an open nature, allowing its values to develop dynamically according to the needs of the times. Second, the values contained in Pancasila are universal, so they can be accepted in various social and cultural contexts. Third, there is a complete and integrated connection between the five principles, forming a mutually complementary thought system.

These three aspects make Pancasila not merely a formal ideology, but as a principle of life (way of life), the constitutional foundation of the state, and as a source of values that guide the formation of law, social norms, and collective habits (habitus) of the Indonesian nation. Thus, Pancasila plays an important role in forming distinctive national character and personality. Therefore, in facing the swift flow of global information and foreign cultural penetration through social media, systematic efforts are needed to revitalize Pancasila values in young people's lives. Social media should not only be a space for information consumption but also utilized as educational media and national character formation, especially in strengthening civic identity of young generation.

2. Methods

This research uses descriptive qualitative research designed to comprehensively explore the role of social media in forming civic identity of students from the Social Science Education (IPS) Study Program in the reform era. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to trace personal experiences, constructed meanings, and active involvement of students in utilizing social media as a means to express their civic identity.

This research was conducted at the Universitas Islam Negeri Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, with the main focus on students of the Tadris Social Science study program. Informant selection was done through purposive sampling method, namely determining respondents based on certain criteria that have been deliberately established. Respondents in this research are students who have high levels of activity on social media and show interest or involvement in civic, social, and digital political issues.

The information collection process was conducted by conducting in-depth direct interviews with respondents and observing respondents' digital activities. Interviews were semi-structured, providing convenience for respondents to express their thoughts and experiences openly and reflectively. In addition, researchers also directly observed how young people interact on social media, including the types of content they upload, comments they provide, and their involvement in online discussion forums that discuss crucial issues concerning the state, including government policies and citizenship.

3. Results and Discussion

Research results show that social media platforms have significant influence in the process of determining civic identity of Tadris Social Science students. Their activities in digital media are not only entertainment or social networking means but also function as spaces for learning and reflecting on social and political issues. Through brave interactions and discussions, students can sharpen awareness and critical attitudes that support their role as active and responsible citizens. However, this process is not without various challenges such as the spread of inaccurate information, hate speech, and negative content that can disturb the development of healthy civic values. In this situation, digital literacy ability becomes a crucial aspect that students must master to be able to filter and analyze information correctly. This skill makes them not only information consumers but also agents of change who can utilize social media as a means to strengthen friendship character based on Pancasila values. Continuous training on digital literacy and state awareness through social media platforms is very necessary so that young people can face various risks in cyberspace while contributing positively to civic identity development in the reform era.

Social media platforms provide great opportunities for young people to actively engage in conversations about social and political issues, but also store various significant risks (Nurudin, 2012). One of the most prominent risks is the spread of false information that can influence understanding of citizenship and damage social bonds. In addition, hatred that often appears on social media platforms can divide and threaten friendship values that should be valued by young people. Furthermore, digital literacy skills become a key factor in optimizing social media benefits to form positive civic identity (Faliyandra et al., 2022). By having good digital literacy abilities, students can be more selective and critical in processing information so they avoid the impact of negative content. This ability also encourages active student participation as agents of change, who not only receive information but also play a role in disseminating educational and constructive content. In addition, Aprianti et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of character training through social media based on Pancasila values as the foundation for national identity formation. Strengthening national values in the digital realm can strengthen nationalism and unity among technology-savvy young people. However, this character development needs to be supported by continuous education and policies that promote healthy and responsible social media use so that its positive benefits can be widely felt.

In the current digital era, the impact of social media cannot be separated from various other digital applications, including games like Free Fire and Mobile Legends that become challenges and are often part of young people's daily routines. Although many of these applications are not directly related to citizenship issues, these games can influence their thinking patterns and social interactions. For example, games that carry themes of cooperation or competition can form collaborative and healthy competitive attitudes, which are important aspects of civic identity. Therefore, it is very important to expand this study not only limited to social media but also to other applications that can influence the character and identity of young people. In the context of civic identity creation, social media serves as a platform where students can express their views, engage in discussions, and participate in social and political issues. In the reform era, where freedom of expression is increasing, Tadris Social Science students are given opportunities to contribute to constructive dialogue about national values and social responsibility. Yet, there are challenges such as the spread of false information and hate speech that can disturb, which can direct their understanding of civic identity that should be based on Pancasila values. Therefore, it is very important for young people to master good digital literacy to be able to utilize social media and other applications

wisely. Digital literacy includes not only skills in using technology but also the ability to spread and share received information. In this case, education that prioritizes character strengthening and national values is very necessary to ensure that young people not only become information consumers but also become active agents of change in building positive civic identity amid globalization challenges.

Tadris Social Science students play a crucial role in developing civic identity through social media use. One action that can be taken is by producing various educational and motivational content for society about civic values. This type of content can include writings, videos, or infographics that raise social, political, and cultural issues related to the Indonesian context. By presenting interesting and accurate information, students not only contribute to increasing public awareness but also form their identity as active citizens who care about public discourse. On the other hand, Social Science students can also use social media to organize online discussions or forums that discuss citizenship-related themes. Through platforms like Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook, they can invite speakers such as academics, activists, or community figures to share their views and experiences. This activity not only broadens students' insights but also creates opportunities for young people to interact and dialogue about their social and political responsibilities. In this way, Social Science students can strengthen solidarity and togetherness among fellow citizens while affirming their position as agents of change in the reform era. Students can also actively participate in social campaigns that involve promoting Pancasila values and national identity. Through social media, they can rally support for various initiatives aimed at increasing understanding of the importance of tolerance, justice, and unity in society. For example, they can create campaigns that highlight cultural and ethnic diversity in Indonesia, as well as affirming the importance of maintaining harmony between groups. By doing this, Social Science students not only contribute to forming positive civic identity but also help create a more inclusive society capable of competing amid globalization challenges.

3.1. The Function of Social Media as a Civic Learning Tool for Young People

The development of social media platforms directly affects the surge in the number of users each year. Social media is one of the online activities favored by the public almost every day. According to data from the Global Web Index report in 2015 regarding the latest developments in social media use, it is known that about 25% of the total time spent by users in cyberspace is used to access social networking platforms. This trend aligns with increasing internet access through mobile devices. This very rapid technological development brings optimism toward improving education quality and ease in the learning process. On the other hand, Indonesia as a nation has its own characteristics in running national and state life, with Pancasila serving as the main foundation in the national value system. Modernization and cultural globalization currents have brought changes in value systems and ways of thinking of society, from previously tending to be irrational to more rational and logical.

The development of science and technology also facilitates various human activities while encouraging the birth of creative and innovative ideas. Amid increasingly individualistic lifestyles, technology provides solutions that reduce dependence on others' help in daily life. Several opinions state that social media is the result of a combination of sociological and technological elements, capable of changing one-way communication patterns into two-way interactions, and opening up information democratization spaces where every individual can become not only consumers but also content creators. More than just communication media and self-expression, social media also has great potential as a civic education tool. The civic

education process aims to create intelligent, proactive, and responsible individuals in social, national, and state interactions.

Social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter (now X), YouTube, and TikTok have transformed into spaces for vibrant public discussion. Through these channels, various citizenship-related topics such as democracy, human rights, social justice, and diversity can be presented in ways that are more interesting and relevant to young people. Dr. Indra Charismiadji, an education expert, states that social media is a "learning container not bound by place and time. Young people can understand democracy, tolerance, and human rights directly from real events happening around them" (Kompas.com, 2021). This situation creates opportunities for civic learning to take place more contextually and interactively. Young people not only receive information one-way as in classrooms but also participate in discussions, provide criticism, and express their views. This condition allows civic learning to be more contextual and dialogical. One of the main roles of civic education is to increase active participation in national and state life and practice Pancasila values.

According to Yuniarto et al. (2022), the meaning of Pancasila as state ideology is that the values contained in Pancasila become normative foundations in organizing national and state life. National consensus on these values not only functions as a unifier in plural society but also becomes a mechanism for peaceful and constructive conflict resolution. This idea aligns with the views of the nation's founders who emphasized the importance of formulating shared values as social glue that can be implemented in daily life. As state ideology, Pancasila provides moral and ethical direction for Indonesian citizens in forming behavior and taking attitudes. The five principles that form the core of Pancasila contain basic principles used as guidelines in interacting within society and in state contexts. These values have positions as moral norms whose implementation depends on individual awareness and conviction. If Pancasila principles as national ideology are violated, the consequences that emerge are not in the form of formal legal sanctions but in the form of social and moral sanctions from the community environment.

Social media platforms provide opportunities to realize this. Social campaigns, online petitions, fundraising, and public awareness raising about national issues can be easily accessed and supported by youth. In previous literature, social media use has a positive relationship with increased political and social awareness among high school students in Indonesia (Sari & Zulkarnain, 2024). Researchers found that students active on social media tend to be more sensitive to social problems and more enthusiastic about engaging in social or political activities around them. This finding shows that social media is not just a place for self-expression but also plays a role in forming more active and progressive civic identity.

Citizenship is not only related to an individual's legal status in a country but also includes understanding, attitudes, and behaviors that reflect love for the homeland, social responsibility, and active participation in national and state life. In the educational context, the goal of civic learning is to form intelligent, active, and responsible citizens. However, conventional classroom learning is often considered boring and not contextual for students. This is where social media can play an important role as a bridge between theory and practice, and between civic values and young people's real lives. Social media functions as a means to increase social awareness and strengthen national spirit. Many social initiatives emerge, are implemented, and spread through social media platforms. Examples include anti-corruption movements, environmental care campaigns, support for minority rights, or empathy for disaster victims. Young people are not just spectators but also active participants in these movements, both directly and through other means. This involvement is a concrete manifestation of their social responsibility as community members.

Social media provides opportunities for young people's voices to reach wider audiences and creates a sense of ownership toward national issues around them. Social media can also be a means to express creativity in conveying national messages and civic values. Young people familiar with digital technology have the ability to create creative content such as short videos, memes, podcasts, or animations that depict Pancasila values, diversity, tolerance, and love for the homeland. This creative method is more easily accepted by peers because it uses language, style, and media relevant to their characteristics. In this context, social media not only functions as a tool for conveying information but also becomes a venue for expressing culture and national values in more relevant and modern forms. However, using social media in the context of civic learning requires caution. Despite having many benefits, social media also presents significant challenges such as the spread of fake news, hate speech, political polarization, and digital radicalization. Therefore, digital literacy education is needed as support in social media use. Digital literacy helps young people distinguish accurate information, avoid misleading content, and use social media wisely. In the civic context, digital literacy becomes an important asset to become ethical and responsible digital society members.

Civic education that uses social media should not only be individual responsibility. Educational institutions, government, and civil society organizations must play active roles in building digital ecosystems that support civic learning. Schools and universities, for example, can integrate social media use into curricula by creating digital projects focused on civic issues. Government can launch national campaigns on social media that are attractive to young people, while community organizations can organize training or webinars on digital literacy and community engagement. On the other hand, the presence of young figures active on social media who become role models in conveying national values is crucial. Influencers with millions of followers have great influence in shaping young people's perspectives and behaviors. If they use their platforms to provide positive messages about tolerance, justice, and political participation, they perform civic functions in contemporary contexts. This shows that being an active citizen does not always mean participating in demonstrations or formal political forums but can also be realized through constructive digital posts and interactions.

3.2. Formation of Youth Civic Identity Through Social Media

In the contemporary era, the majority of young individuals actively maintain social media accounts on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube. These platforms are utilized daily for communication, entertainment, and knowledge acquisition. Beyond these functions, social media also plays a significant role in shaping civic identity— defined as an individual's sense of belonging and awareness of their role as a member of a nation. This includes love for the homeland, understanding the basic values of the state such as Pancasila, and participating in social and political life. In the past, this identity was more formed through schools, families, or media like television and radio. But now, social media has also become a primary place that influences young people's way of thinking and attitudes toward their nation.

Social media can form civic identity in various ways. For example, when someone watches videos about Indonesian history, reads posts about the importance of unity in diversity, or follows accounts that spread the spirit of patriotism, these things indirectly strengthen their sense of nationalism. Social media also provides space for young people to voice their opinions on social and political issues, such as corruption, environment, or justice. Likewise, they become more caring and feel responsible toward the country. Research by Yunita et al. (2024) mentions that social media can be an effective tool for instilling Pancasila values in young people. However, they also warn that social media can have negative impacts

if used without awareness. Much misleading content or content that divides unity, such as hoaxes and hate speech, exists. If young people are not careful, they might be influenced by such things and lose direction in understanding their own national identity. Similar findings were revealed by Assidiq et al. (2023) that social media has potential in forming national identity among millennials if used wisely. This platform should be a means to foster nationalism, not the opposite. Therefore, young people need adequate digital literacy skills, namely the ability to sort accurate and false information, and utilize social media for positive and constructive activities.

One concrete example of social media's influence on national identity can be seen from digital movements that emerge during Indonesian Independence Day. Many young people create creative content with independence themes, such as short videos about national heroes, struggle songs, or motivational writings about love for the homeland. This shows that social media can be a means to spread the spirit of nationalism in ways that suit the times. However, of course, not all content on social media supports the formation of national identity. There is also content that mostly imitates foreign culture without understanding its context, and some even disparage their own culture. This is where the importance of education lies, both at school and at home. Teachers and parents need to guide young people to be wiser in using social media. The government and educational institutions can also play a role by creating digital literacy programs and attractive educational content. In conclusion, social media is a very powerful tool in forming civic identity among young people. If used correctly, social media can be a place to learn, discuss, and foster love for the homeland. But if used without awareness, social media can become a threat to national identity. Therefore, young people must be equipped with critical thinking skills and national values so they can make social media a tool for building, not destroying.

Looking at these conditions, it can be concluded that social media is not only a means of communication and entertainment, but also becomes a strategic space in forming civic identity, especially for Social Studies Teaching (Tadris IPS) students in the reform era. As prospective social science educators, they are not only required to understand citizenship theory academically, but also need to internalize national values through digital practices that reflect social and national responsibility. Civic identity formed through social media for these students increasingly focuses on critical understanding of national issues, active involvement in public discourse, and the ability to filter information ethically in accordance with the spirit of reform that emphasizes openness, participation, and democratization. Thus, social media becomes a means of self-actualization that simultaneously strengthens Indonesian identity amid rapid globalization currents and can implement every Pancasila value in daily life and generate love for the homeland.

3.3. Strategies for Strengthening Civic Identity Through Social Media

In the midst of digital era development, social media has become an integral part of daily routines, especially for young people. Applications like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube are not only used as entertainment media, but also utilized as media to foster and strengthen civic identity. This identity includes nationalism, understanding of Pancasila principles, and active involvement in community, nation, and state life. One approach considered effective for strengthening civic identity through social media is by utilizing these platforms as attractive and interactive learning media. For example, educators can use Instagram to deliver Pancasila Education material creatively, such as through infographics or short videos. The use of social media by teachers in Pancasila Education can help students better understand nationalism values.

Platforms like TikTok can be used to disseminate content that evokes national identity. Research by Nugroho & Khairurrasyd (2024) reveals that TikTok can function as a tool to introduce national symbols, such as the Red and White flag, Indonesia Raya song, and local cultural heritage, to young people. With creative content, young people can more easily understand and appreciate their national identity. However, to maximize social media capabilities in strengthening civic identity, adequate digital literacy is needed. Young people need to be equipped with the ability to choose correct information and realize the influence of content they access or share. This is important to avoid spreading false information or content that can damage national values. Digital literacy education can be held through school programs or educational campaigns on social media.

Strengthening civic identity can also be done through digital storytelling that raises local culture. For example, by creating content that tells the history or traditions of various regions in Indonesia. Kristiyono et al. (2024) show that integrating local culture through digital storytelling can help overcome the decline in national identity due to digital media influence. The government and educational institutions also have a crucial role in this strategy. They can provide support to create educational content that is attractive and relevant for young people. In addition, they can also organize training or workshops on digital literacy and how to use social media wisely. With support from various parties, social media can become a powerful tool in strengthening civic identity among young people.

Overall, strategies for strengthening civic identity through social media involve utilizing digital platforms as learning spaces, improving digital literacy, strengthening local cultural identity through digital storytelling, and support from government and educational institutions. With a holistic and collaborative approach, social media can become an effective container for forming young people who love their homeland and have high national awareness.

3.4. The Concept of Civic Identity in the Reform Era

Civic identity refers to a person's sense of attachment and obligation to the country where they live. According to Azra (2007), an expert in education and culture, civic identity needs to reflect the diversity of cultures and ethnicities that exist in Indonesia. This is crucial so that every individual feels valued and recognized. Before the reform era, many individuals felt burdened and lacked freedom to express their views. However, post-reform, society began to dare to express opinions and engage in political processes. According to Prof. Ryaas Rasyid, a political expert, reform has created opportunities for society to be more active in shaping the nation's future. This is a significant step in developing a stronger civic identity.

Indonesia is known as a diverse nation. There are various tribes, religions, and diverse cultures. In terms of civic identity, this diversity should be made a strength. Everyone, regardless of background, has the right to contribute to nation building (Santiago, 2019). Although there are many positive developments, there are major challenges in forming a solid civic identity. One of the biggest challenges is the emergence of intolerance and discrimination. According to Hidayat (2018), an intellectual, intolerance can damage social order and threaten national unity. Therefore, it is important for all citizens to understand and appreciate existing differences.

Civic education plays an important role in creating constructive civic identity. Through education, young people are taught about rights and responsibilities as citizens. According to Media also contributes greatly to forming civic identity. In today's digital age, information can be easily accessed by anyone. In this case, media must be utilized to spread positive values and strengthen the spirit of nationalism (T. Hidayat & Fajri, 2024). Responsible media can reduce conflict and increase understanding between groups.

Civic identity in Indonesia has undergone major changes since the implementation of reform in 1998. This reform era brought transformation in various political, social, and cultural fields, providing opportunities for society to be more involved in citizenship. In the context of national life, civic identity is not only understood from a legal perspective, but also includes a sense of belonging, responsibility, and active participation in social life. Azra (2007) emphasizes that civic identity should ideally reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity that exists in Indonesia so that all citizens feel recognized and respected. In this case, social media plays a significant role as a means of forming civic identity in the reform era, as it becomes the main channel for communicating and channeling community participation. Young people utilize this media to express opinions, disseminate information, and establish social interactions.

According to T. Hidayat & Fajri (2024), social media provides opportunities for students to engage in discussions related to citizenship issues, such as human rights, tolerance, and diversity. This fact shows that social media has great potential as a means of increasing awareness and understanding of civic identity among young people. For Tadris Social Science students, the role of social media is very strategic in forming their civic identity. As prospective educators, they are responsible for conveying citizenship values to future generations. Through social media, they can access information and diverse perspectives on social and political issues.

The main challenge in using social media is the abundance of unverified information, which can cause misunderstandings. M. W. Nugroho et al. (2021) noted that students who often receive false information through social media can develop wrong views about civic identity. Therefore, mastering media literacy becomes very important, so that students can sort correct and relevant information. This responsibility also becomes part of the role of educational institutions in equipping students with adequate media literacy skills. In addition, social media can also be utilized to strengthen solidarity among students. In the reform era, many social movements were born through social media, including movements that focus on social justice and environmental preservation issues. This involvement also creates a sense of connection with fellow students and the wider community, which ultimately strengthens their civic identity as part of a larger community.

The significance of social media in forming civic identity is also seen from how students utilize this platform to disseminate information and educate others. Through the content they produce, students can encourage their friends to be more aware of the importance of participation in democratic processes, such as in general elections. Young people show active participation as voters, indicating that social media plays a role not only as a communication tool, but also as a means of driving social action. In the reform era, civic identity includes a sense of responsibility and attachment to the country. Social media contributes greatly to forming this identity, especially for students, by becoming a space to voice opinions, disseminate information, and strengthen awareness of citizens' rights and obligations.

3.5. The Role of Social Studies Education in Directing Social Media Usage

In today's digital age, social media has become an important element in daily life, especially for young people who actively use platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube for various purposes - to communicate, seek information, and express themselves. However, if used unwisely, social media can cause negative impacts, including the spread of hoaxes, cyberbullying, and identity problems. Thus, Social Studies Education (IPS) plays a crucial role in guiding students to utilize social media positively and responsibly. Social Studies education can provide understanding to students about wise social media use. According to Faliyandra et al. (2022), digital literacy becomes very important in Social Science education to face

technological advances in the 21st century. With digital literacy, students can sort accurate information and avoid spreading fake news.

Social media influences student behavior, both positively and negatively. Social Studies education functions to shape students' character to be responsible when interacting on the internet. Aprianti et al. (2022) reveal that Social Science learning can form a sense of social responsibility in students, so they can utilize social media for beneficial activities. Excessive use of social media can trigger identity problems for teenagers. T. Hidayat & Fajri (2024) reveal that middle school students who are active on social media are at high risk of experiencing identity crisis. Social Studies education can help students understand their identity and develop healthy self-confidence.

Education in Social Studies also functions to increase social awareness and civic sense among students. According to Yuniarto (2024), the challenges faced by Pancasila today are twofold, with effects on the actualization of Pancasila's moral values for the continuity of community, nation, and state life. First, internal challenges, namely contemporary reality shows that Pancasila ideology currently, and in the future, faces a number of challenges that are beginning to appear clearly. From within the country, one challenge that emerges is the existence of separatist movements that try to separate themselves from the Republic of Indonesia. Meanwhile, from abroad, significant pressure also comes from the swift flow of globalization and modernization due to rapid advances in information and communication technology.

In this context, Pancasila has a strategic position as an alternative ideology capable of answering the challenges of the times. Pancasila's characteristics that are open, universally valuable, and integrated into the nation's life as a way of life and constitutional foundation, make it the main foundation in forming national identity. Through Social Studies learning, students are equipped with the ability to understand social life dynamics, as well as the importance of ethics and responsibility, especially in interactions in digital spaces such as social media. This learning is directed so that students grow into citizens who are aware of their rights and obligations, and can contribute actively in community life.

Social Science teachers can use social media as an attractive and effective learning tool. Indriyati (2023) noted that the application of social media in Social Science education can improve communication, material understanding, and learning motivation among students. However, it is important for teachers to provide guidance so students can use social media wisely and safely. Although social media has various benefits, there are challenges that must be faced, such as addiction risks, privacy issues, and inappropriate content. Waris et al. (2024) emphasize the need for steps to reduce risks and utilize the benefits of social media platforms in the context of Social Science learning.

Social Studies education holds an important role in guiding students to use social media in positive and responsible ways. Through digital literacy, character formation, and integration of social media in teaching, students can develop social awareness and strong civic sense. Thus, they can become a young generation that is smart in utilizing technology for common good. Social Studies Education has an important role in guiding students to utilize social media positively and responsibly. Through digital literacy, character development, and application of social media in the teaching and learning process, students can build social awareness and deep civic sense. Thus, they can grow into a young generation that is smart in utilizing technology for common good. This role becomes increasingly important amid rapid digital technology development that has a wide scope.

Social media is now more than just a communication tool, but has transformed into an important element in students' daily social life, where they build opinions, develop self-image,

and express views on public issues. Therefore, Social Science education as a subject that discusses human interactions, social norms, and life in society, becomes an ideal means to guide students not only to be technically skilled in using social media, but also wise in ethical and social aspects. During the learning process in Social Science, students are introduced to basic concepts such as norms, values, social interactions, community structure, and social dynamics. These concepts become the foundation for students to understand how to act in society, including in the digital world. Digital literacy in the context of Social Science education is not only about how to use technology, but also about teaching students to think critically, identify hoaxes, understand ethics in digital communication, and appreciate differences and diversity in cyberspace.

Social Science education integrated with digital literacy can shape students' character into responsible digital citizens, namely individuals who are aware of their digital rights and obligations and can contribute positively to the digital public environment (Juri et al., 2020). Likewise, students not only become social media users, but can also function as agents of social change who spread values of goodness, empathy, and justice. Students' character as a component of national education goals is also influenced by Social Science learning that is reflective and contextual. Social Science educators have important opportunities to guide students in developing social care and solidarity toward others by utilizing social media to spread social awareness. For example, through digital social campaign initiatives aimed at educating society about the importance of tolerance among various religions, gender equality, or environmental preservation. With such activities, students practice applying social values they learn in class to daily life, while training their courage to speak in public spaces.

Social Science education that adopts this approach indirectly strengthens students' civic identity in digital society. As expressed by Faliyandra et al. (2022), the use of social media in Social Science education becomes more effective if focused on increasing social participation and developing empathy through positive digital interactions. Social media also plays an important role as a tool for building individual identity and civic identity among students. In the context of Social Science education, discussions about citizen roles in democratic society, the significance of law, and citizens' rights and obligations, become the foundation for understanding appropriate behavior in the digital world. Students who understand the importance of maintaining digital image, not spreading hatred, and not participating in cyberbullying, show that Social Science education has succeeded in forming character that aligns with Pancasila values.

This is reinforced by research by Aprianti et al. (2022), which states that Social Science learning that emphasizes social character formation, such as responsibility, tolerance, and solidarity, is very relevant in preparing students to face digital communication challenges in today's era. Therefore, the teacher's role becomes very crucial to continue strengthening value-based learning with an applicative approach in the context of students' digital life.

In this increasingly connected era, the Social Science learning approach that prioritizes collaboration and participation becomes an effective strategy to make students not just information receivers in education, but also active individuals in building their awareness. Teachers can create learning environments that encourage students to discuss current social phenomena they encounter on social media, analyze their impacts, and seek joint solutions to these problems. Hence, students learn that social media is not an arena for spreading hatred or ignorance, but a place to share ideas, foster solidarity, and convey social aspirations peacefully and intelligently. This is part of the digital citizenship education process taught through Social Science subjects - learning that is not only theoretical, but also practical and contextual.

The biggest challenge in realizing this certainly comes from external factors, where students are exposed to content that is not always beneficial, sometimes even harmful. Therefore, Social Science education must be present as a resilient system, capable of increasing students' mental and moral resilience so they don't fall into negative social media influences. This initiative can be achieved by providing a forum for open dialogue between teachers and students about the virtual world realities they face, and equipping them with emotion management techniques, critical evaluation of content, and skills to build healthy social interactions. T. Hidayat & Fajri (2024) state that character strengthening through Social Science is very successful in helping students face identity crises that often arise due to pressure from social media, especially during adolescence. Therefore, approaches that are personal, humane, and profound need to be included in the Social Science curriculum in today's digital era.

Ultimately, Social Science education can function as both protector and guide for students in exploring the vast and diverse digital world. By improving solid digital literacy, developing positive social character, and creating contextual learning spaces, students will develop into smart, empathetic, and responsible digital citizens. They not only understand how to use social media, but also realize the reasons and purposes of such use. This is the essence of the true role of Social Science education: equipping young people not only with academic excellence, but students also need to show attitude maturity and wisdom in using technology. As such, social media and technology are not seen as threats, but as means to build a dignified society. Therefore, Social Science education is not only academically important, but also provides moral and social foundations for young people in answering digital era challenges.

4. Conclusion

Social media now plays an important role in many people's daily lives, especially young people. Every day they use applications like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, or X (Twitter) to seek entertainment, communicate, and even learn new things. But more than that, social media can also help young people form their civic identity. This means, from what they see, read, and share on social media, they can learn about the importance of patriotism, Pancasila values, responsibilities as citizens, and how to behave well in a diverse society.

Tadris Social Science students as prospective teachers have a big role to be examples in using social media responsibly, someone can create meaningful content, for example discussing social issues, inviting society to care about the environment, or voicing the importance of living in diversity and tolerance. This makes social media not just a place for entertainment, but also a learning medium that can foster nationalism and care for the country.

However, social media also has negative sides. There are many fake news, hate speech, and even content that can divide unity. Therefore, it is very important to have digital literacy skills - the ability to understand and filter information correctly. Social Science education is very important here because it can guide students not only to be smart at school, but also wise in using technology. Social Science teaches social values, ethics, and responsibilities as citizens, which are very needed in today's digital life.

Hence, it can be concluded that social media is a very powerful and influential tool in forming the civic identity of young people. If used well, social media can be a way to create a generation that is smart, caring, and loves the homeland. But if not used wisely, social media can actually bring bad influence. Therefore, we all - whether students, teachers, or parents -

must work together so that social media can be used as a tool to strengthen the spirit of nationalism and build a better future for Indonesia.

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