

Digital Literacy and The Quality of Students' Democratic Participation: A Synthesis of Empirical Evidence in Pancasila Education

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Abstract

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This study aims to identify and analyze the relationship between digital literacy and the quality of students' democratic participation within the framework of Pancasila education. A qualitative research approach using literature review and synthetic analysis methods was used to collect and integrate empirical evidence from various previous studies. Data were collected through document reviews, scientific journals, and relevant research reports. The results of the study indicate that high digital literacy can improve students' understanding of Pancasila values and strengthen their democratic participation in various discussion forums and academic community activities. Furthermore, good digital literacy plays a role in expanding access to information, increasing critical awareness, and encouraging students to actively participate constructively in the democratic process. This study confirms that strengthening digital literacy as part of Pancasila education is crucial for developing intelligent, critical, and active students in democratic life. The conclusion of this study is that digital literacy plays a strategic role in improving the quality of students' democratic participation, and the integration of digital literacy into the Pancasila education curriculum requires greater attention. The recommendation is the development of a comprehensive and relevant digital literacy program to support the strengthening of students' democratic character within the context of national education.



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Introduction

Digital transformation has changed the way citizens obtain information, communicate, express their aspirations, build networks, and engage in various public issues. The digital space is no longer simply a means of exchanging information, but has evolved into a social space that allows citizens to interact with public issues and engage in various forms of civic participation. This change provides broader opportunities for students to engage in democratic life. In the context of Pancasila Education, this involvement is not only seen in terms of the presence or frequency of participation, but also in the ability to understand public issues, use information appropriately, express opinions argumentatively, respect differences, and act ethically and responsibly (Dahl, 2020). This orientation aligns with the book *Pancasila Education Based on Outcome-Based Education (OBE)* which places students as learning subjects who are expected to be able to understand, analyze, evaluate, make decisions, and actualize Pancasila values in academic, social, and civic life.

Gilster, as quoted by (Hoerudin, 2026), defines digital literacy as a person's ability or skill to understand and use information from various digital sources effectively and efficiently in various formats. Eshet, as quoted by (Arifudin, 2026), adds that digital literacy emphasizes the ability to use various digital sources effectively.

Bawden is quoted as (Mulyanto, 2026) offering a new understanding of digital literacy, rooted in computer literacy and information literacy. Computer literacy developed in the 1980s when microcomputers became widely used and reached all levels of society. In line with technological developments, information literacy continued to develop in the 1990s when information became easier to operate, access, and disseminate through networked information technology. Hague, as quoted (Hoerudin, 2025), states that digital literacy is the ability to create and share in different modes, such as creating, elaborating, communicating effectively, and having an understanding of when and how to use information technology tools to support these processes.

From the several opinions above, it can be concluded that digital literacy is not only the ability or skill to operate technology but also the ability to read and understand information conveyed by digital media by using it wisely, intelligently, and appropriately in order to foster communication and interaction in everyday life and become a good and innovative solution in the learning process so that teaching and learning activities are not monotonous.

However, broader access and increased activity in digital spaces do not necessarily indicate adequate democratic participation. While individuals may actively comment, share information, follow public issues, create content, or express their views through digital media, such engagement may not necessarily be accompanied by the ability to verify information, adequately understand issues, consider evidence, respect differing perspectives, construct arguments, and consider the consequences of their actions. Therefore, participation in the digital environment needs to be understood not only in terms of the presence or absence of engagement, but also in terms of the quality of the processes, considerations, and responsibilities that accompany it.

According to Joseph A. Schmeter quoted (Kartika, 2026) explains that democracy is an institutional plan to reach political decisions where individuals gain the power to decide how to compete for the people's votes. Sidney Hook quoted (Daryaman, 2024) argues that democracy is a form of government where important government decisions are directly or indirectly based on the majority agreement given freely by the adult people.

According to Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl quoted (Sari, 2024) stated that democracy is a system of government in which the government is held accountable for their actions in the public sphere by citizens who act indirectly through competition and cooperation with their elected representatives. Henry B. Mayo quoted (Hoerudin, 2024) stated that democracy as a political system is a system that shows that general policies are determined on the basis of the majority by representatives who are effectively supervised by the people in periodic elections based on the principle of political equality and held in an atmosphere of guaranteed political freedom.

Based on the various definitions of democracy above, it can be concluded that democracy is a form of government in which power or sovereignty rests with the people. Therefore, democracy, as the foundation of social and national life, implies that the people determine matters concerning their lives, including assessing state policies, as these policies will ultimately determine the lives of the people.

This issue is increasingly relevant because the digital space presents a complex information environment. Digital transformation opens opportunities for citizens to expand communication and participation, but also presents challenges in the form of disinformation, opinion polarization, information manipulation, hate speech, privacy issues, and a decline in the quality of public dialogue. This situation demonstrates that the ability to use digital technology alone is not sufficient to foster critical and responsible civic engagement. Citizens need the capacity to access, understand, assess, use, and respond critically to digital information so that the digital space can be utilized as an environment for constructive democratic participation. Within the framework of Pancasila Education, this need is increasingly important because technological developments must be accompanied by strengthening critical thinking skills, communication ethics, respect for differences, and civic responsibility.

Pancasila Education is a systematic effort to instill the basic values contained in Pancasila in students. As the ideology and foundation of the Indonesian state, Pancasila plays a vital role in shaping the nation's character, morals, and ethics. Through this education, it is hoped that the younger generation will have a deep understanding of the values of Pancasila and be able to apply them in their daily lives (Indiati, 2023). This is in line with the national education goals stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, namely to develop the potential of students to become people who are faithful, pious,

have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. According to Rahayu (Simbolon, 2023), Pancasila and Citizenship Education is a study of our daily lives, teaching how to be good citizens and upholding the values of Pancasila, which are the foundation of the Indonesian state.

According to Nur, quoted (Hoerudin, 2023), Pancasila Education also encourages the development of tolerance among the younger generation through learning about unity and unity in diversity. They are taught to respect differences and understand that Indonesia is a country inhabited by various ethnicities, religions, and cultures. The younger generation learns to appreciate this diversity and maintain harmony between groups. This is very important in the formation of the character of the Indonesian nation. Through learning the values of Pancasila, the younger generation can develop social awareness and concern, national spirit, love of the homeland, and an attitude of tolerance. The importance of Pancasila Education for the current young generation is because Pancasila education has a significant role in shaping a young generation that is ready to face the future, especially in today's technological developments that greatly influence the values and identity of the country. Thus, Pancasila Education plays a role in shaping good character and responsibility in all things, as expressed by Cahyono as quoted by (Erfiyana, 2026), explaining that through Pancasila Education, they are taught to have a critical yet constructive attitude, appreciate differences, and actively participate in democratic life. This is not only important for their personal development but also for maintaining stability.

Therefore, Pancasila education plays a crucial role in shaping the character of good and responsible individuals. Through this education, we are taught to develop a constructive critical attitude, respect differences, and actively participate in democratic life.

In this context, digital literacy plays a crucial role in civic life. Digital literacy is not simply understood as the ability to use devices or access the internet, but rather encompasses the capacity to understand and assess information, evaluate the credibility of sources, use information appropriately, and communicate and interact responsibly in digital environments. This understanding positions digital literacy as a capacity that enables citizens not only to be present in digital spaces but also to use them critically and responsibly. Based on this, there is a conceptual foundation for examining the relationship between digital literacy capacity and how citizens participate in public life, particularly when engagement occurs through digital environments.

Several previous studies have shown that digital literacy is related to civic engagement, while digital media use is related to various forms of participation in public life. (Retnasari et al, 2025) found a positive and significant relationship between digital literacy and civic engagement in Gen Z Indonesia. (Wahid et al, 2025) showed that the use of social media to obtain political news was related to online political participation of students in West Java, although the apparent strength of the relationship was relatively low. Other studies have shown a relationship between social media activity and participation in public discourse, the multidimensional nature of students' digital literacy, and the diversity of digital political participation, from information consumption to online campaigns and mobilization (Sukidin et al, 2025). These findings suggest that digital capacities and environments are relevant to civic life, but the relationship between technology use and forms of public engagement varies.

The research question then shifted from simply asking about students' access to or active participation in digital spaces to asking whether their capacity to understand, evaluate, use, and communicate digital information is related to the quality of their engagement in public life. Previous research has largely focused on digital skills, media use, and civic engagement, or the existence of participatory activities. This perspective does not fully explain the quality of democratic participation as a more substantive form of engagement, characterized by the ability to understand public issues, use information and evidence appropriately, present arguments, consider differing perspectives, and act responsibly. Thus, there is still room to clarify the relationship between digital literacy and the quality of students' democratic participation.

In this study, the quality of democratic participation is not understood simply as the frequency or intensity of digital activity. The concept refers to the ability to convey views meaningfully, use relevant information to form a position, consider differing views, construct arguments responsibly, and direct engagement toward public issues and interests. This definition is important because digital engagement takes different forms and depths. The results of (Wahid et al, 2025) study indicate a low level of clarity in the use of social media on variations in online political participation, while (Sukidin et al, 2025) study shows

that social media activity, participation in public discourse, and attitudes toward democracy are related but not identical constructs. (Fitria, 2025) and (Fortuna et al, 2025) also show that digital participation occurs across a broad spectrum, from information consumption and low-cost activities to discussions, content production, campaigns, and mobilization.

This gap is important to examine in the context of Pancasila and Citizenship Education, because democratic participation is part of citizenship competency that demands knowledge, critical thinking skills, communication skills, respect for differences, democratic disposition, and responsibility. OBE-Based Pancasila Education place civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions as complementary competencies in developing critical, democratic, and responsible students (Wahab & Sapriya, 2023). The book also emphasizes learning that takes students from the stage of understanding and analysis to the ability to evaluate, make decisions, and actualize Pancasila values in real-world situations. Therefore, digital literacy needs to be understood not only as the ability to operate technology, but as a capacity that supports students in understanding public issues, evaluating information, building dialogue, making decisions, and participating ethically and responsibly in civic life (Winarno., 2023).

Based on this description, this study aims to clarify the relationship between digital literacy and the quality of students' democratic participation through a synthesis of previous empirical evidence. This study does not present digital activity as a single measure of democratic participation, but rather examines the quality of engagement based on the use of information, argumentation, respect for differences, and responsibility in public life. The novelty of this study lies in the synthesis of empirical evidence that positions the quality of democratic participation as a more substantive construct in understanding its relationship to digital literacy, while still placing the findings within the context of Pancasila Education. Thus, the focus of the study moves from simply assessing whether students are active in the digital space to a deeper understanding of how the quality of engagement is interpreted in democratic life.

Method

According to Rahardjo, as quoted by (Supriatna, 2026), a research method is a way to obtain and seek tentative truth, not absolute truth. The result is scientific truth. Scientific truth is open to continuous testing, criticism, and even revision. Therefore, there is no best method for seeking truth, but rather the appropriate method for a specific purpose based on the existing phenomenon. Budiharto, as quoted by (Safar, 2026), states that the choice of research method must be tailored to the research being conducted to achieve optimal results.

This research uses a qualitative research approach with a literature study method (library research Nazir, quoted (Abdillah, 2024), explains that library research is a series of activities related to library data collection methods, reading and recording, and processing research materials. Zed, quoted (Supriatna, 2025), explains that this approach was chosen because the focus of the research is digital literacy and the quality of student democratic participation: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education. The library approach allows for in-depth textual, conceptual, and comparative analysis.

This research is qualitative descriptive-analytical. Descriptive research is used to describe the theory of digital literacy and the quality of student democratic participation: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education. Analytical research is used to review, assess, and critique the theory of digital literacy and the quality of student democratic participation: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education. According to Creswell (Abdillah, 2022), qualitative research is used to understand phenomena holistically by emphasizing meaning and interpretation.

According to Iskandar in (Mayasari, 2026), a qualitative approach is where qualitative research as a scientific method is often used and implemented by groups of researchers in the social sciences, including educational science. Iskandar in (Kartika, 2025) explains the qualitative research approach as a research and understanding process based on methods that investigate social phenomena and human problems.

Bogdan and Taylor in (Kartika, 2024) explain that qualitative research methodology is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. In this study, researchers create a complex picture, examine words, detailed reports of respondents' views, and conduct studies in natural situations, specifically related to digital literacy and the quality of student democratic participation: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education.

According to Nana Syaodih Sukmadinata in (Fazriah, 2024), qualitative descriptive research aims to describe and illustrate existing phenomena, both natural and man-made, with greater attention to characteristics, quality, and interrelationships between activities. Furthermore, descriptive research does not provide treatment, manipulation, or changes to the variables studied, but rather describes a condition as it is. The only treatment provided is the research itself, which is conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation.

Bungin, quoted by (Ulfah, 2025), explains that qualitative descriptive research aims to describe situations, conditions, or social phenomena that exist in society and then use them as research objects, and attempts to bring reality to the surface as a model or depiction of certain conditions or situations. This study aims to provide an analytical overview of digital literacy and the quality of student democratic participation: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education.

Engineering can be seen as a means of carefully performing technical work using the mind to achieve goals. Although research is essentially a scientific endeavor, it is conducted to systematically and realistically collect data to establish the truth. Research methodology is a means of finding solutions to any problem. In this case, the author collected information on digital literacy and the quality of student democratic participation: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education, and others (Ulfah, 2026).

Because it requires library materials for its data sources, this research utilizes library research. Researchers require books, scientific articles, and other literature related to the topics and issues they are exploring, both printed and online (Abdillah, 2026).

Finding information from data sources requires the use of data collection techniques. Amir Hamzah in (Mayasari, 2025) claims that data collection is an effort to gather information related to the topic being studied. The author uses library research methods to collect data. Specifically, the author begins with the library to collect information from books, dictionaries, journals, encyclopedias, papers, periodicals, and other sources that share views on digital literacy and the quality of student democratic participation: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education.

Furthermore, Amir Hamzah in (Nurazizah, 2026) states that data collection is defined as various efforts to gather facts related to a topic or discussion being or will be explored. These details can be found in scientific literature, research, scientific writings, dissertations, theses, and other written sources. According to (Awaludin, 2023), data collection can be conducted in various situations, using different sources, and employing different techniques.

The data collection technique in this study was documentation. The researcher conducted a study of documents related to digital literacy and the quality of student democratic participation: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education.

Documentation is a data collection technique through existing written documents or records (Mayasari, 2023). Documentation comes from the word document, which means written objects. In implementing the documentation method, researchers investigate written objects, such as books, magazines, meeting minutes, and diaries. According to Moleong in (Engkus, 2019) that the documentation method is a way of collecting information or data through examining archives and documents. Furthermore, according to (Afia, 2020) that the documentation strategy is also a data collection technique proposed to the research subject. The data collection method using this documentation method is carried out to obtain data on the state of the institution (research object), namely digital literacy and the quality of democratic participation of students: a synthesis of empirical evidence in Pancasila education.

Moleong, quoted (Puspita, 2020), explains that the collected data was analyzed using an interactive analysis model consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Meanwhile, Syarifah et al. in (Sudrajat, 2021) explain that data reduction is carried out by filtering relevant information, presenting data in a systematic narrative form, and drawing conclusions based on research findings. To ensure data validity, this study used source triangulation, namely comparing information from sources. According to Moleong in (Akhira, 2022), source triangulation helps increase the validity of research results by comparing various perspectives on the phenomenon being studied.

According to Muhadjir in (Taufiq, 2022), data analysis is the activity of systematically conducting, searching for, and compiling records of findings through observation and interviews so that researchers focus on the research they are studying. After that, the findings are made into material for others, edited, classified, and presented. Data validity techniques using triangulation techniques include techniques and

sources. Data analysis using the Miles and Huberman model in (Heryati, 2022) consists of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Suryana, quoted (Khaerunnisa, 2022), explains that data analysis is the activity of focusing, abstracting, and organizing data systematically and rationally to provide answers to research questions. In this study, after data collection, it is analyzed to draw conclusions. The data analysis techniques are as follows:

- 1) Moleong, as quoted by (Azizah, 2022), explains that the descriptive analysis method uses words and images rather than numbers to collect data. This is due to the application of qualitative methods. Furthermore, everything collected may be key to the research. Therefore, a research report will contain data citations to illustrate the presentation of the report.
- 2) Content Analysis or Content Analysis. According to Holsti in (Yuliani, 2022) that Content Analysis is any technique used to draw conclusions through attempts to discover the characteristics of a message, and is carried out objectively and systematically. This study is carried out in addition to that, by means of content analysis, one book can be compared with another book in the same field, both based on differences in the time of writing and regarding the ability of these books to achieve the target as material presented to the public or a particular group of people. Then the obtained textual qualitative data is categorized by sorting the data objectively, systematically, and generally.
- 3) Eriyanto, quoted (Pikri, 2022), explains that critical analysis is a perspective that states that researchers are not value-free subjects when viewing research. Critical analysis generally stems from certain perspectives or values held by the researcher. Therefore, the researcher's bias and position on a problem greatly determine how the text/data is interpreted. The critical paradigm focuses more on interpretation because through interpretation, we gain broad insight, delve deeper into the text, and address the meaning behind it.

Results and Discussion

An analysis of six empirical studies shows that digital literacy, digital media use, and various forms of civic engagement have been studied in various contexts in Indonesia. These six studies differ in subject characteristics, constructs, research designs, and analytical techniques. Therefore, the findings are not treated as a single, homogeneous dataset but are synthesized by maintaining the characteristics of each study and considering their proximity to the constructs of digital literacy and democratic participation.

(Retnasari et al, 2025) studied 150 Gen Z in Indonesia to examine the relationship between digital literacy and civic engagement. The results of the study showed a positive and significant relationship with $r = 0,340$; $p < 0,001$, with a contribution of around 11,5% towards citizenship engagement. These results provide empirical evidence regarding the relationship between digital literacy and civic engagement. However, the construct civic engagement used in the study has a different scope from the quality of democratic participation which is the focus of this research.

(Wahid et al, 2025) involving 407 students in West Java to examine the relationship between the use of social media as a source of political news and online political participation. A simple linear regression analysis produced $R = 0.109$, $R^2 = 0.012$ or 1.2%, and $p = 0.028$. These results show a significant relationship, but the apparent power of social media use on variations in online political participation is relatively low. This finding indicates that digital media use alone is not sufficient to explain variations in students' online political engagement.

(Sukidin et al, 2025) studied 482 high school students in Indonesia by paying attention to the relationship between multicultural attitudes, social media activities, participation in public discourse, and attitudes toward democracy. The results of the study show that social media activity is positively related to participation in public discourse, but does not show the same direct relationship attitudes toward democracy. The findings suggest that social media activity, participation in public discourse, and orientation toward democracy are interrelated, but not interchangeable, constructs.

(Marwiyah et al, 2025) studied 197 students from four state Islamic universities in Indonesia in the context of the 2024 Presidential Election. Digital literacy was measured through four competencies, namely technical skill, information usage, communication, and creation. The results of the study show that the level of digital literacy of students is generally in the category advanced, while the aspect communication and creation still need strengthening. These findings demonstrate that digital literacy is a multidimensional construct encompassing broader capabilities than simply mastering technology.

(Fitria, 2025) shows that students' digital political participation takes place in various forms. As many as 89% of students in the study used social media as their primary source of political information, while their engagement ranged from passive information consumption to online political campaigning and mobilization. These findings demonstrate variations in the levels and forms of student engagement in the digital political environment.

Meanwhile, (Fortuna et al, 2025) through qualitative descriptive research on the use of social media X found various forms of participation, ranging from likes and retweets until threads, infographics, and hashtag campaigns. The research also identified the problems of slacktivism, polarization, and ethics in digital spaces. These findings suggest that the presence of digital activity does not necessarily reflect the depth or quality of civic engagement.

Comparison of the six studies reveals several patterns relevant to the research focus. First, digital literacy is related to civic engagement, but the constructs used in previous research are not entirely identical. (Retnasari et al, 2025) showed a positive relationship between digital literacy and civic engagement, while (Marwiyah et al, 2025) showed that digital literacy consists of several competencies, including technical skill, information usage, communication, and creation. Thus, digital capacity is related to civic life and has various dimensions. Second, the use of digital media is related to public participation, but the strength and form of the relationship are different. (Wahid et al, 2025) showed that the use of social media to obtain political news only explains 1.2% variations in online political participation. Meanwhile, (Sukidin et al, 2025) found a relationship between social media activities and participation in public discourse, but does not show the same direct relationship attitudes toward democracy. This difference shows that the intensity or presence of digital activity cannot be used as the sole basis for assessing the quality of democratic engagement. Third, digital participation comes in various forms and depths. (Fitria, 2025) shows a spectrum of involvement ranging from information consumption to campaigning and mobilization, while (Fortuna et al, 2025) shows variations from likes and retweets to content production, discussions, and digital campaigns. This variation is also accompanied by problems with slacktivism, polarization, and ethics which show that the form of participation does not always reflect the quality of the engagement process.

Overall, the six studies provide evidence that Digital capacities and activities are linked to various forms of citizenship engagement, but these relationships occur in varying constructs, contexts, and levels of depth. There is no single, uniform measure that can be used directly to represent the quality of democratic participation. These differences reinforce the need to view participation not simply in terms of the presence or intensity of digital activity, but rather in terms of the quality of engagement reflected in the use of information, argumentation, consideration of differences, and responsibility in public life.

Thus, the results of the synthesis provide an empirical basis for this study to place the quality of democratic participation as a more substantive construct in understanding its relationship to digital literacy. This position also serves as a bridge to discussions on how digital capacity can be interpreted within the framework of citizenship competency and Pancasila Education.

The results of the synthesis provide an empirical basis that digital literacy is related to civic engagement, but the relationship cannot be understood simply as a relationship between the ability to use technology and political activism. (Retnasari et al, 2025), for example, found a positive relationship between digital literacy and civic engagement in Indonesia's Gen Z. These findings demonstrate that digital capacity is relevant to civic life, while also raising questions about the quality of engagement that develops from that capacity.

Difference between civic engagement and the quality of democratic participation is important in this research. Civic engagement encompasses various forms of engagement, while the quality of democratic participation has more substantive demands, such as understanding public issues, using information and evidence, the ability to present reasons, openness to differing views, and responsibility for actions taken. Therefore, the findings of (Retnasari et al, 2025) are more appropriately understood as evidence of a link between digital literacy and the capacity for citizen engagement, rather than as evidence that digital literacy alone produces quality democratic participation.

This reading is in line with the citizenship competency framework in Pancasila Education. The textbook places civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions as complementary elements in developing critical, democratic, and responsible students. Within this framework, digital literacy can be positioned as a capacity that supports students' ability to understand issues, evaluate information, communicate, and make decisions in public life.

The Use of Digital Media as a Supporting Condition, Not the Sole Measure of Participation Quality. (Wahid et al, 2025) findings show that the use of social media to obtain political news is associated with online political

participation, but the significance of this relationship is relatively low. This finding suggests that the presence of digital channels or the intensity of their use are insufficient to explain variations in political engagement.

In a democratic life, technology primarily provides space and opportunity to participate. The quality of engagement depends on how these opportunities are used. Information obtained through digital media needs to be understood, compared, and evaluated before being used as a basis for forming attitudes or expressing views. Likewise, presence in the digital public sphere becomes more meaningful when communication is supported by adequate reasoning, considers other perspectives, and is directed at issues relevant to the common good.

Framework Dig Comp 2.2 strengthens this understanding by positioning digital competencies on the ability to understand information, evaluate sources, communicate, create content, maintain security, and solve problems (Vuorikari et al, 2022). This perspective suggests that the quality of technology use is determined more by the accompanying competencies than by the intensity of use alone.

In the context of Pancasila Education, the implication is that learning needs to provide space for students to use technology to critically address public issues. Textbooks also include case studies, discussions, analyses of public issues, projects, and Project Citizen as a learning experience that can bring together knowledge with real problems.

Digital Activities, Public Discourse, and the Quality of Democratic Participation, the findings of (Sukidin et al, 2025) make it clear that social media activities, participation in public discourse, and attitudes toward democracy are related but not identical constructs. This distinction helps explain why communication activity in digital spaces cannot be directly used as a measure of the quality of democratic participation.

Quality democratic participation is not only characterized by the ability to speak or attend discussions, but also by the quality of the deliberation process. Students need to understand the issues being discussed, use relevant information, provide justifiable reasons, and respond to differences without neglecting the common good. In other words, the main issue is not simply how active a person is in the digital public space, but how that space is used to carry out citizenship roles.

This perspective aligns with the orientation of Pancasila Education, which emphasizes democratic life within the framework of deliberation, respect for differences, responsibility, and shared interests (Kaelan, 2014). Textbooks direct students to evaluate citizenship issues using Pancasila values, constitutional principles, and accountable arguments. Therefore, the digital space can become a democratic learning environment when students not only react to information but also use it to construct arguments, engage in dialogue, and make responsible decisions.

Digital Literacy as a Multidimensional Competence, the findings of (Marwiyah et al, 2025) show that students' digital literacy has a multidimensional structure. The measurement includes technical skill, information usage, communication, and that mastery of technical aspects does not yet reflect the entire digital capacity.

This finding is important because students act not only as recipients of information but also as communicators and producers of information in the digital public sphere. While someone may possess excellent skills in operating devices and obtaining information, they still need reinforcement in communicating information accurately and producing meaningful content. In the context of public participation, these two skills determine how information is used and shared with others.

Thus, digital capacities relevant to democratic participation include the ability to access and understand information, evaluate the credibility of sources, use information appropriately, communicate, and produce content responsibly. This understanding positions digital literacy as supporting capacity for citizenship competency, not just mastery of the device.

In the context of Pancasila Education, learning therefore needs to shift from mastering technology to utilizing technology to analyze problems, assess information, develop arguments, and make decisions. This orientation aligns with textbooks that prioritize learning outcomes in understanding, analyzing, evaluating, reflecting, making decisions, and actualizing Pancasila values.

Depth of Digital Participation and the Difference between Activity and Quality, Fitria's (2025) findings indicate that social media has become an important part of the student political information environment, with forms of engagement ranging from information consumption to campaigning and mobilization. Fortuna et al. (2025) show similar variations, ranging from likes and retweets to discussions, content production, and digital campaigns, along with issues of slacktivism, polarization, and ethics.

The findings indicate that there are levels of depth of digital participation. Low-cost activities can be a gateway to broader engagement, but they don't necessarily demonstrate an understanding of the issues or a

substantive contribution to public life. In contrast, activities involving information seeking, argumentation, dialogue, content production, and campaigning require greater cognitive and communicative engagement.

Therefore, the quality of democratic participation is more appropriately seen from how citizens treat information and respond to public issues, not just the frequency of activity. Sharing information is a form of engagement, but the quality of that action depends on whether the information has been verified, whether the views expressed are well-reasoned, and whether the communication takes into account other parties and the public interest.

This is where the conceptual contribution of the research becomes clearer. Previous studies on digital literacy and digital participation have often used measures such as civic engagement, online political participation, or social media activity. This research synthesis brings together these lines of evidence to highlight quality of engagement as a distinct dimension from the mere presence of digital activity.

When all the findings are read in their entirety, it becomes clear that the relationship between digital literacy and democratic participation is complex. Digital literacy is related to civic engagement, but digital media use alone is not sufficient to explain the quality of participation. Differences in constructs and the strength of relationships across studies also indicate that the quality of democratic participation is not shaped by a single factor.

Branson quoted (Aminulloh, 2023) stated in the framework of civic competence, these findings can be understood through the relationship between civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions. Civic knowledge is needed to understand public issues and the context of the information being faced. Civic skills needed to find sources, evaluate evidence, build arguments, and communicate. Meanwhile, civic dispositions provide ethical orientation so that knowledge and skills are used with respect for differences, consideration of common interests, and responsibility for actions.

This framework is consistent with Pancasila Education, which positions citizenship competency as a combination of knowledge, skills, values, character, and responsibility (Sapriya, 2023). From this perspective, digital literacy can be positioned as part of the process of developing digital citizen competency, capable of utilizing information and technology to carry out their citizenship roles critically and responsibly.

Implications for OBE-Based Pancasila Education Learning. Synthesized findings indicate that digital literacy supports students' abilities to understand information, evaluate sources, construct arguments, and participate responsibly. In the context of Pancasila Education, these skills are relevant to the development of citizenship competencies needed for democratic life in the digital space.

This orientation is in line with the approach Outcome-Based Education, which emphasizes the relationship between learning outcomes, learning experiences, and assessment (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Therefore, digital literacy does not need to be considered a stand-alone supplementary material, but can be integrated into learning outcomes that enable students to demonstrate their ability to understand public issues, evaluate information, present arguments, engage in constructive dialogue, and make responsible decisions.

Learning implications can be realized through case analysis, evaluation of digital sources, discussions of public issues, verification of information, and reflection on the consequences of actions in the digital space. These activities enable learning outcomes to be translated into observable and assessable skills, thus connecting digital literacy to the practice of civic competence in public life.

This approach is in line with the learning outcomes of the book which emphasize students' ability to evaluate citizenship issues using Pancasila values, constitutional principles, and accountable arguments, as well as developing the ability to participate ethically, critically, constitutionally, and responsibly.

Overall, the research synthesis shows that digital literacy is linked to civic life, but the quality of democratic participation cannot be explained solely by access, use, or intensity of digital activities. A more substantive dimension lies in how citizens understand issues, use information, construct arguments, respond to differences, and hold themselves accountable for their actions in the public sphere.

On that basis, this research places digital literacy as supporting capacity for citizenship competency, while the quality of democratic participation is understood as a form of involvement that reflects the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and responsibilities of citizens. The novelty of this research lies in the synthesis of various empirical evidence that has previously been widely discussed. civic engagement, online political participation, social media activity, and public discourse separately, then bringing them together to clarify the dimensions of the quality of participation in the context of Pancasila Education.

This finding does not prove a cause-and-effect relationship and does not position digital literacy as the sole factor determining the quality of democratic participation. The tenable conclusion is that there is sufficient

empirical evidence to clarify the relationship between the two constructs, while the quality of participation remains related to the context, form of engagement, communication processes, and accompanying civic competencies.

Conclusion

Based on a synthesis of six empirical studies, this study finds that digital literacy and digital activities are related to various forms of citizenship engagement, including civic engagement, online political participation, and participation in public discourse. However, the form and strength of these relationships vary. Previous findings also show varying depths of digital participation, ranging from information consumption and low-cost activities to discussions, content production, campaigns, and mobilization. Therefore, digital activity alone is not sufficient to represent the quality of democratic participation. The main implication of these findings is that the quality of democratic participation is determined not only by the presence or intensity of activity in the digital space, but also by how information is used, public issues are understood, views are expressed and accounted for, differences are considered, and actions are directed toward the common good. Within this framework, digital literacy can be understood as a capacity that supports civic engagement, not as the sole factor determining the quality of democratic participation.

This research's contribution to Pancasila and Citizenship Education lies in strengthening the understanding that digital literacy needs to be placed within the framework of citizenship competencies. Digital skills need to be linked to civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions so that students are not only able to obtain and use digital information, but also able to understand public issues, build arguments, engage in dialogue, respect differences, and participate ethically and responsibly. This position emphasizes the relevance of digital literacy as part of developing citizenship competencies in the realm of Civics. The implication is that Pancasila-based learning Outcome-Based Education It is necessary to integrate digital literacy with learning experiences that enable students to analyze information, evaluate the credibility of sources, compare perspectives, develop evidence-based arguments, engage in dialogue, make decisions, and participate constructively in public life. Therefore, strengthening digital literacy is directed at the ability to use technology to support the achievement of critical, ethical, and responsible citizenship competencies. The conclusions of this study are limited to patterns obtained through the synthesis of previous empirical evidence. This study does not prove a causal relationship and does not position digital literacy as the sole factor determining the quality of democratic participation.

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