

CONSTRUCTING CIVIC COMMUNICATION AS A FIELD OF
CIVIC EDUCATION: INTEGRATING PERSUASIVE AND SOCIO-
CULTURAL APPROACHESYudha Pradana¹, Andriyana², Naya Syaura Binti Shariffuddin³

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand how civic communication, as a synthesis of civic education and communication, strengthens civic attribution and value transmission within the socio-cultural domain. This involves examining persuasive strategies to foster civic engagement and bonding shared values. The research employs a phenomenological method to explore the meaning and participant reflections concerning the synthesis of civic education and communication. Civic communication is understood as the process of shaping smart and good citizen through messages, media, and persuasive communication within public spaces, ultimately aiming for the common good. Furthermore, civic communication is intrinsically linked to deliberative democracy, both substantively and procedurally, encompassing civic engagement, collaboration, networking, and civic culture. Persuasive communication is primarily conducted by the civic community through digital and social media platforms. The recommendations derived from this research are: (1) Integrate civic communication studies into curricula to better achieve the goal of fostering smart and good citizen; (2) Develop and implement a persuasive and contextual civic communication model that empowers citizens with affirmation and self-efficacy, encouraging their engagement in achieving the common good.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami konstruksi komunikasi kewarganegaraan sebagai sintesis keilmuan PKn dan komunikasi dalam menguatkan atribusi warga negara dan transmisi nilai melalui domain sosio-kultural. Konteks tersebut berkenaan dengan strategi persuasif yang dapat memantik atribusi warga negara berupa keterlibatan yang bermutu dan pengikatan terhadap nilai bersama. Metode penelitian ini ialah fenomenologis untuk mencari makna dan refleksi partisipan terkait sintesis PKn dan komunikasi. Komunikasi kewarganegaraan terkait dengan pembentukan warga negara yang cerdas dan baik terkait pesan, media, dan proses komunikasi yang persuasif melalui ruang publik untuk mencapai kebaikan bersama. Terlebih, komunikasi kewarganegaraan berkaitan juga dengan demokrasi deliberatif secara substansial dan prosedural yang mencakup keterlibatan warga negara, kolaborasi, jejaring, dan kultur wargawi. Komunikasi persuasif dilakukan oleh komunitas kewarganegaraan melalui penggunaan media digital dan media sosial. Rekomendasi dari hasil riset ini ialah: (1) perlunya pemberian porsi kajian komunikasi kewarganegaraan dalam kerangka PKn Kemasyarakatan terkait dengan pencapaian warga negara yang cerdas dan baik; (2) perlunya dikembangkan implementasi model komunikasi kewarganegaraan yang bersifat persuasif dan kontekstual dalam memberikan afirmasi dan efikasi diri warga negara guna terlibat dalam pencapaian kebaikan bersama.

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INTRODUCTION

Civic Education generally aims to foster smart and good citizen. This vision is realized by adapting to the evolving dynamics of national life, which are intrinsically linked to the roles, positions, rights, and responsibilities of citizen. The study thus inseparable from citizens and their varied dynamics, all in service of this vision. Ontologically, it pertains to the behavior of citizens, and epistemologically, it aligns with the context of democratic development (Winataputra, 2016). The purpose of civic education is to foster quality and responsible participation in political and community life (Branson, 1999). In addition to its connection with civic behavior and participation, civics education also aligns with the cultivation of values. This is related to the formation of good citizens through the cultivation of concepts and value systems as the “great ought” (Somantri, 2001). The meaning of the above can be simplified to state that civic education aligns with the development of civic attributions and related to achieving the common good, which is inseparable from a civic values.

In line with the development of civic education, experts formulated its domain as an effort to cultivate smart and good citizen. This is illustrated in four contexts: (1) the curricular domain, which serves as a vehicle for formal and non-formal education; (2) the socio-cultural domain, which functions as a vehicle within the community's living environment; (3) the academic domain, which promotes the development through scientific activities and research to strengthen it scientifically; and (4) the bureaucratic domain (civic for government), which focuses on developing and utilizing as a vehicle for the development of government officials or bureaucrats (Sapriya, 2015). The study domain emphasizes the contextual enrichment of civic education to strengthen civic attributions. This presents an opportunity for the implementation and study of civic education development beyond formal settings. Additionally, it opens avenues for strengthening the studies through inter-, multi-, and trans-disciplinary approaches, tailored to scientific advancements.

Scientifically, civic education, initially a branch of political science focused on the study of citizens' rights and obligations, interacts synergistically with the social sciences, humanities, and other disciplines, and committed to fostering citizen maturity in citizenship, encompassing a multifaceted field of study (Somantri & Winataputra, 2017; Wahab & Sapriya, 2011). The study's expansion is integral to achieving its scientific vision and mission. It also requires adaptation to the various dynamics of citizens' lives while preserving its core identity. Civic education studies often examine knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, participation, and engagement by integrating scientific approaches to understand civic phenomena, particularly in the digital age. These phenomena include the use of digital and social media for democratization, media semiotics in relation to civic attributions, the transmission of civic values and the transformation of civic culture, and digital literacy in media use. This is also related to the acceleration of digital and social media in civic life.

Based on empirical experience, several phenomena were found in Indonesia related to how communication, especially the use of digital and social media, relates to civic life. The phenomenon of moral decline amidst the development of digital media (Bila et al., 2023), the shift of citizens' political discourse to digital space and high level of activity in responding to public issues (Mulyono et al., 2023), the challenges and obstacles, such as authenticity and credibility of information on social media use (Tarsidi et al., 2023), the echo chamber and filter bubble on social media, exacerbated by the prevalence of “war flames” (Arisanty et al., 2026), and the phenomenon produces structural inequality and the polarization of digital identities in communication practices (Praja et al., 2026). These phenomena are of course

related to how civic education analyzes the use of communication media, which cannot be separated from communication studies. This context allows for a synthesis of studies between civic education and communication.

The synthesis of civic education and communication studies can be achieved through utilizing the socio-cultural domain. To respond to the challenges of the digital era, civic education needs to adopt analytical tools from the discipline of communication studies. Communication is related to the lives of citizens, rather than being merely social. Communication is not just a medium for delivering information; it is also a process encompassing the creation, exchange, meaning, and impact of messages in human life. This process includes rhetorical, semiotic, phenomenological, cybernetic, sociopsychological, sociocultural, and critical traditions (Craig, 2012). The context emphasizes communication's function as a social process, particularly its forms of self-concept and self-actualization, which work together to achieve the common good and highlight human relations (Mulyana, 2019; Y. Sulistyowati, 2005). So, from a citizenship perspective, communication studies can help encourage and strengthen the attribution of smart and good citizen. This is especially related to the socio-cultural dimension where communication media in the form of digital and social media can function as a means of achieving smart and good citizen.

To strengthen this study, the communication aspect cannot be separated from the 7C principle. Communication also cannot be separated from the 7Cs: credibility, context, content, clarity, continuity and consistency, channel and capability of the audience. Credibility provides an atmosphere of mutual trust between communicators and communicators, context in the form of a supportive social environment and interrelated media, content in the form of messages to provide the same understanding, clarity of the message conveyed must be clear and structured, continuity and consistency where the message is repeated consistently to provide reinforcement, channels in the form of channels used to convey messages, and the capability of the audience as understanding communicate the message conveyed (Cutlip et al., 2000). To effectively operationalize communication within the socio-cultural domain of civic education, those fundamental principles must be adapted. These elements are certainly related to citizens, especially concerning personal and social dimensions, to strengthen their sense of ownership regarding public space. Moreover, the impetus of contemporary digital life, as a public space, cannot be separated from the existence of citizens. Smart and good citizen will always be well informed and confirm the truth of information in the context of communication to encourage quality participation.

This contextualization provides an opportunity for the creation of civic communication as an umbrella for studying how citizen attribution is driven through processes, messages, channels, and methods of communication. This relates not only to how citizens interact through conversations and civic narratives, but also to strengthening civic attributions and transmitting civic values. This can be achieved by utilizing media as a communication channel, both in terms of methods and substance, creating a forum for shaping smart and good citizen. Through the study of civic communication, the interactive process between citizens regarding their attribution is examined in the context of achieving the common good.

Citizens will be encouraged to develop meaningful personal and social attribution, thereby fostering a high-quality civic life and contributing to the common good. Particularly in the functionalization of the socio-cultural domain, this study will benefit the scientific development of civic education. This is reflected in the benefits of using communication media in civic life as studied by civic communication. Communication technologies as

communication media can encourage quality participation from citizens and be a measuring tool for how citizens are engaged in social and political life of citizenship, and also can foster community (Anggraeni et al., 2024; Nah et al., 2021; Paskarina, 2020).

Research on civic communication has extensively explored various aspects of citizenship, including activism, engagement, participation, deliberation, and digital citizenship. This research also investigates the role of media and technology, such as digital and social media, and communication for social change. Communication practices facilitated by media can enhance understanding of citizenship in terms of knowledge, emotions, and participation (Grabe & Myrick, 2016); social media often serves as a new platform for individuals with existing political interests rather than automatically transforming apathetic young citizens into politically active ones (Keating & Melis, 2017); digital communication provides a means to express viewpoints, construct civic identity, voice opposition, demonstrate support, and participate in democratic processes (Davis et al., 2018); the framework of digital activism communication involves the production, dissemination, exchange, and negotiation of messages concerning public interests (Hutchinson, 2021); the digital platform ecosystem extends beyond being merely a communication tool functions as a valuable social, civic, and democratic space that requires careful management (Dijck, 2020); a significant relationship exists between civic engagement, social capital, and political attitudes (Ferrucci et al., 2020); the evolution of participatory communication is closely linked to the formation of citizenship (Incio et al., 2021); the moderate use of expressive digital media, including the internet, social media, and mobile media, can foster online citizen participation and collective efficacy (Nah et al., 2022); civic communication competence can be measured through dialogue, collaboration, contribution, and discussion, illustrating the connection between technology and civic capacity (Fadhillah et al., 2026); and fundamental mechanisms for democratic participation are intertwined with communication, interpersonal relations, and socialization (Asimakopoulous et al., 2026).

This context concerns how communication is understood as a mechanism for mobilization and participation, digital citizenship through digital literacy and communication skills, media and citizens as actors in public communication, civic expression and social networks, and challenges to the quality of democracy in the form of echo chambers, polarization, and misinformation. These studies are contextual, but none have explicitly mentioned civic communication as an umbrella of conceptual and practical studies that could be developed in civic education. Furthermore, the civic communication that will be initiated is not merely communication about citizenship, but also makes communication a process of forming and practicing citizenship.

Civic communication study also relates to efforts to spark awareness and mobilize citizen action through argumentative symbols and messages. These can strengthen knowledge and attitudes, foster engagement, and implement civic actions, with an emphasis on collective morality, bonding, bridging, and collaboration through the use of media. The novelty offered is the construction of civic communication as a field of study and a scientific brand in civic education which functionalizes socio-cultural domain. This is achieved by synthesizing communication and citizenship, producing a conceptual framework distinct from political communication (which focuses on power relations and political processes) and intercultural communication (which focuses on interaction between cultural groups). This positioning establishes a field that examines how communication processes shape citizenship attributes and transmit values through persuasive, deliberative, and participatory approaches. The study focuses on citizen relations in public life and how communication fosters awareness, identity, and civic actions for the public interest.

The persuasive approach, strategically employed in developing civic communication, addresses *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* by leveraging sociocultural domains through civic communities. These communities build networks, foster collaboration, and forge bonds based on shared values. *Ethos* is demonstrated through the credibility of the message source, which the civic community establishes by presenting valid and credible facts and data. *Logos* is framed through narrative storytelling and the presentation of social proof to encourage civic participation. *Pathos*, meanwhile, is leveraged through emotional bonds that align with civic values and culture. Ultimately, this approach is rooted in civic culture to facilitate deliberative participation in achieving the common good.

Substantively, this study can also serve as a new subdiscipline within civic education, with its own material and formal objectives. The material object is the communication process related to civic life, while the formal object is how communication shapes civic attributions, transmits civic values, constructs civic culture, and encourages participation toward the common good through persuasive, deliberative, and participatory mechanisms. This also has the potential to become a strong theoretical foundation for the development of a brand of civic education scholarship within the realm of civic communication.

Based on the explanation above, the formulation of the research problem is: how is the construction of citizenship communication as a study on civic education carried out to strengthen civic attribution and value transmission?. This study aims to understand the construction of civic communication as a civic education studies in strengthening citizen attribution and value transmission. The focus of this study is the examination of communication and citizenship in relation to civic attribution and value transmission. Moreover, this research will describe a field of civic education in the study of integrating persuasive and socio-cultural approaches.

METHOD

This study uses phenomenological methods. Through phenomenology, a description of meaning is presented based on experience and perception related to a phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mertens, 2019). The phenomenological method will provide a reflective interpretation of participants' views and experiences regarding the framework of cohesion, communication, and citizenship. This framework strengthens citizen attribution and the transmission of values. The expected reflection will yield results aligned with the proclaimed goals. Related to this, the participants will provide interactive interpretations related to perceptions that are impossible to separate from interpretation (Patton & Broward, 2023). So this research will interpret the meaning of experience, not just describe it.

Phenomenology, in the context of Heidegger's approach, interprets a subject based on the existence of their lived experience. Researchers aim to interpret the meaning of these experiences, rather than merely describing them. Consequently, researchers set aside *epoché* when seeking to understand the meaning of an experience. Through this phenomenological study, the researcher seeks to express participants' reflections regarding the synthesis of civics education and communication. This synthesis relates to developing citizenship attribution and transmitting values through persuasive, deliberative, and participatory mechanisms.

Participants in this study are: (1) communication experts who have expertise and interest in the study of persuasive communication, namely AB (Universitas Padjadjaran), ES dan MF (Universitas Islam Bandung); (2) civic education experts who have specialties in the study and development of socio-cultural domains, namely SS (Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia), BM (Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta), dan DZ (Universitas Sebelas Maret); (3)

civic community activists who actively utilize digital media and social media, namely *Nusa Bumi Lestari* (FI) dan *Bareng Warga* (RA).

Data collection was carried out through interviews to find out participants' reflections on communication in strengthening citizen attribution, as well as observation by observing community activities recorded through digital media and social media. The semi-structured interviews allowed for the exploration of in-depth participant answers while still adhering to the established research framework. Meanwhile, observation focused on community activities and communicative efforts to encourage civic engagement and attribution through digital and social media. The interviews and observation were conducted between October 2024 and February 2025. Observations of civic community activities were conducted through social and digital media such as Instagram, kitabisa.com and change.org. This approach was chosen because the community actively uses these platforms for persuasion, aiming to trigger citizen engagement based on the values they espouse. Passive (non-participant) observation in this context aligns with the focus of the research.

Qualitative data analysis is carried out in tandem with data collection and the writing of findings, using the following approaches: (1) preparing and processing data, (2) reading the entire dataset, (3) initiating coding, (4) applying coding, (5) presenting descriptions, and (6) interpreting data (Creswell, 2014). The operational steps involve preparing transcripts of interview results and observation sheets related to citizen communication activities. Then, the data obtained from interviews and observations are examined and classified based on keywords and themes such as the common good, civil/citizen, political voices, civic activities, participation, and media. Next, the data is presented contextually in thematic descriptions, and its meaning is interpreted to provide substance and conclusions regarding the construction of scientific synthesis on civic education and communication.

To ensure the validity and authenticity of the data, triangulation and member checking were conducted. This research combines various data obtained from participant interviews with supporting documentation studies. Specifically, themes identified from participants' interview accounts were cross-checked against the narratives, persuasive messages, visual content, and documented forms from social and digital media posts. This allowed the researchers to assess the consistency between participants' experiences and their observable practices. Through triangulation and member checking, it is hoped that a deep, valid and comprehensive understanding of the synthesis of studies on civic education and communication will be achieved. In this study, the researcher upheld ethical standards concerning the voluntary participation of informants during data collection. Furthermore, it was essential to safeguard informants from potential physical and psychological harm or pressure, as well as any material or non-material losses. This included protecting informant privacy and ensuring anonymity and confidentiality when necessary. The ethical considerations in this study addressed the voluntary nature of participation, the management of emotional involvement between researchers and participants, the adherence to scientific and social norms during data collection and analysis, the presentation of authentic and representative data, and researcher reflexivity to minimize bias.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The participants view that communication cannot be separated from the lives of citizens, especially in relation to strengthening the attributions and transmission of values. Civic communication can be encouraged by utilizing the social domain of society as a form of civil society activation that will help strengthen democratization and serve as a means of education for the development of civic knowledge and civic skills.

As emphasized by AB that:

“Civic communication involves a public narrative built by civil society through the participation of organizations and communities. This participation often takes the form of mutual cooperation, collaboration, and engagement, serving as a type of communication that encourages people to unite their vision and desires toward a common goal, bound by shared values and rules”.

While the SS stated that:

“Civic communication is related to 21st-century skills and cannot be separated from the rights and obligations of citizens. It also strengthens the role of civil servants in upholding the principle of communication among citizens, ensuring messages are understood proportionately”.

RA emphasizes the role of community by mentioning that:

“Civic communication can offer as platform for reflection on real-world experiences related to the exchange of ideas and community activities, thereby strengthening key issues and building capacity”.

The above reflection emphasizes that the communication aspect developed into civic action and community empowerment. Efforts to revive civic communication require citizens to seek opportunities to create and share public knowledge and discuss public issues; expect their government to be open, transparent, and collaborative; volunteer to the best of their ability; and create and share knowledge about community networks and relationships (Center for Information and Research on Engagement, 2011). The development of civic communication strengthens the role of civil servants in exploring how relationships between citizens through socio-cultural channels, and leverage citizen awareness and communication skills in addressing various civic issues (Pradana et al., 2025). Civic activities communicated by fellow citizens emphasize a common issue to achieve the common good. This reinforces the fact that studies on citizenship can be conducted through a communication lens, which concerns how citizens engage and use communication channels.

Civic communication also provides context for how citizens convey messages to spark collective engagement. The involvement is related to literacy and motivation in solving problems together.

BM revealed that:

“Communication builds awareness through message delivery by putting problems together and attracting knowledge and interest so that citizens become more active”.

While ES stated that:

“Public communication spaces facilitate the exchange of messages and can strengthen civic engagement. These spaces are tailored to the context of those engaged in the exchange”.

It relates to the focus of civic communication on what is expected of citizens, how much they should think and act, and the values that should be placed on their experiences and perspectives (Blumler & Coleman, 2013), and the recognition that communication is recognized as a fundamental basis of citizenship that weighs the interests, needs, and proposals of the community (Incio et al., 2021). Studies on communication and citizenship show that communication can encourage citizens to engage in civic and political activities related to the use of media and interpersonal discussions through the perspective of communication mediation models, social capital approaches, and communication

infrastructure theory to build a vibrant civil society (Nah & Yamamoto, 2019). In addition, it is also related to basic communicative concepts such as opinions, discourse, and representation (Livio, 2017).

Civic communication, carried out by *Bareng Warga* and *Nusa Bumi Lestari*, implemented as a process of interaction between citizens, aims to foster common understanding and facilitate collective action on various issues. This is achieved by strengthening civic engagement, building networks, reminding citizens of shared values, advocating for policies, and encouraging civic action. Furthermore, this concept can be examined within the framework of inclusive media and technology's role in developing citizen participation and communication. This perspective aligns with the need to cultivate civic reflection and engagement in various activities and movements. In another word, civic communication have a role as civic process through which citizens produce, negotiate, express, circulate, and mobilize meanings, values, and public concerns through interpersonal, community, cultural, and digital communication practices to advance the common good.

This context is closely related to democratic practices. Citizenship communication in democratic practice aims to: (1) meet citizens' needs for accessibility in state life; (2) uphold the norm of meaningful choices related to common issues; (3) provide inclusive opportunities for citizens to convey ideas; (4) ensure that policymakers provide excellent services to citizens; and (5) provide a forum for dialogue that will influence decision-making (Blumler & Coleman, 2015). Therefore, it can be interpreted that civic communication cannot be separated from democracy in a practical and substantive manner that involves citizen activation.

Civic communication is inseparable from public spaces and public opinion, which are used to spark engagement, strengthen civic identity, and transmit values. This involves communicating the thoughts and feelings of citizens, both among themselves and with the government. Citizens engage in this communication due to their civil rights (freedom of opinion), political rights (the right to participate in voicing aspirations), and economic and social rights (social welfare). This communication aims to build awareness, participation, and solidarity, all of which are closely related to achieving the common good and fostering emotional connections among citizens.

ES said that:

“Communication is essentially the exchange of messages to find common meaning. On a broader level, communication does not occur in a vacuum; there is context, text, and symbols. In terms of citizen engagement, the space used to exchange messages is a public space tailored to the context of those involved in the exchange”.

Civic communication cannot be separated from the public space as a forum for citizen interaction in uncovering common issues to achieve the common good. Public spaces are places for citizens to share information, discuss, and make rational arguments about policies, values, or issues that affect our lives together (Habermas, 1989). Through the public space, there will be effective and responsive communication in terms of the creation of public opinion that will influence policies (Guntoro, 2020; Pembayun, 2017). Public space is also a forum for information sources and communication tools as a form of public activity for the democratic process (Anggreani et al., 2020). Public spaces in civic communication reflect citizens' desire to express themselves, interact, and collaborate within networks and communities, thereby developing personal and social attributes. The mainstreaming of common issues in these spaces also demonstrates interest, motivation, commitment, and dedication to achieving the common good. Meanwhile, text, context, and symbols manifest

as verbal, visual, or audio-visual messages that foster citizen involvement and transmit values. From this perspective, citizenship is shaped through the communication process. Civic action is built through communication aimed at achieving shared understanding. In this case, communicative rationality, the public sphere, and deliberative democracy become discursive spaces that enable citizens to construct shared meaning regarding the public interest.

The public sphere can be understood as a social space where citizens gather to communicate about issues of common concern. This communication then allows them to form public opinion that can influence the political process and decision-making. This concept is closely related to rational-critical communication, deliberation, public opinion, and citizen participation. This context also strengthens civic communication as a process that takes place within, through, and simultaneously shapes the public sphere. Here, citizens produce and negotiate meaning about common issues, articulate public interests, build civic identity and solidarity, shape public opinion, and mobilize collective involvement and action to achieve common good. Building on the work of *Nusa Bumi Lestari* and *Bareng Warga*, public sphere are leveraged through digital and social media to foster networking, collaboration, and engagement on shared issues. This approach aims to ignite citizen participation and disseminate values pertinent to the issues being addressed. *Nusa Bumi Lestari* specializes in environmental education, whereas *Bareng Warga* focuses on civil society advocacy concerning contemporary, non-electoral political matters. In this case, the deliberation process occurs as citizens communicate to achieve the common good based on shared concerns.

Civic communication, as a synthesis of communication and civic studies, is implemented to reveal citizenship phenomena related to citizens' cognition, affection, and conquest. This relates to the communication media used and the socio-cultural channels within the community. The existence of a linking of social networks and community environments that offer natural incentives and continuous personal guidance to achieve desired change (Bandura, 2001), where the flow of information through the media and social networks not only creates personal attributes but can also change pre-existing ones based on an exposure (O'Rourke, 2006) through the use of media as a means of providing attention, memories, and motivation (Deaton, 2015). So, communication as a mechanism for the formation of citizenship from the production of meaning to the mobilization of civic action. From the production of meaning can foster the formation of identity and civic awareness to the articulation of public interests, and the formation of networks and the mobilization of collective action.

Civic communication study examines how effective communication processes, media, and methods contribute to developing smart and good citizen by strengthening their civic values. This study also considers the media's role in fostering national awareness, shaping public opinion, and encouraging civic engagement for the common good. Furthermore, the study delves into substantive and procedural deliberative democracy, encompassing citizen participation, public dialogue, collaboration, networking, civic inclusivity, and the utilization of public spaces. These elements are crucial for democracy as they foster a more inclusive, informed, and socially active society.

Therefore, civic communication is not just the delivery of information, but is a communication ecosystem that builds citizen attribution, value transmission, emotional connection, and collective action. This conception will help improve the quality of democracy, strengthen citizen relations, create inclusive dialogue spaces, and support participatory public decision-making (Blumler & Coleman, 2015). Moreover, it will also connect knowledge, ethics, and social narratives in democratic life through the development

of common meaning (Brown, 1998). The communication ecosystem will foster a sense of belonging to the community, collective efficacy, and civic participation (Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006). Therefore, civic communication focuses on the lives of citizens to strengthen the capacity of citizens in the form of socio-cultural to produce a quality state life.

The study of civic communication in civic education that functionalizes the socio-cultural domain of citizens is also related to the achievement of citizens' activeness as civic agents. A good citizen not only acts as a good person but also has a commitment to participate in the public interest that is at least demonstrated by an informative interest related to the public interest and ideally plays an active role as a civic agent (Arif, 2022; Cogan, 1999). As an agent of citizenship, the social dimension related to the characteristics of citizens is also something that always comes to the fore, especially in the achievement of citizen activeness in public affairs.

The reality of citizenship, built through the study of civic communication, cannot be separated from the construction of meaning in the public sphere. This interaction of meaning prompts citizens to engage, internalize values, and strengthen both personal and social attribution. Citizens are not merely recipients of information; they are also active participants who create and disseminate meaning about shared issues. This encourages citizens to actively and meaningfully participate. The context encompasses: citizenship messages addressing common issues; communication actors, both individual citizens and social groups; public spaces as forums for participation, collaboration, and networking; and the overarching goal of fostering smart and good citizen.

This, of course, relates to the study of citizenship. One inseparable element of civic attribution and value transmission is the culture of a country's citizens. This context is closely tied to strategies and communication media used to encourage the realization of smart and good citizenship. However, the attribution of citizens is to live, grow, and develop in accordance with the values adopted by the country and with regard to social life in society. This context is also related to the study of communication and citizenship.

AB states that:

“Citizen attributions is related to national character and humanity. Communication can be a trigger to form honest, collectivistic, sensitive, and humanist characters”.

Meanwhile SS states:

“However, citizenship attribution cannot be separated from civic competencies, and another attribut such as the ability to communicate, collaborate, solve problems, and be creative”.

Communication can form a civic orientation where shared values act as a bond for citizens to network. The orientation is also related to deliberation that encourages public assessment, encourages joint action, and presents citizen self-efficacy. Civic communication shapes citizens' attribution to public issues and how that attribution determines citizen engagement. Therefore, citizen culture is very important to be used as a determination in the implementation of civic communication. This culture can drive how democracy occurs, which includes: values, affinity, knowledge, actions, identity, and discussion, all of which are dynamically interconnected and can become a culture of civic communication (Dahlgren, 2002). Culture in the form of space, practices, and popular identities is essential in the social and cultural participation of citizens (Hill, 2013). Thus, the attribution of citizenship is related to how problems are understood as citizenship issues, an awareness of rights and responsibilities, public interests, the formation of a sense of “we” and civic solidarity, the

articulation of aspirations, criticism, demands, and public interests, and the formation of civic networks to produce mobilization and collective action, thereby strengthening democratic life.

The study of civic education, inherently linked to citizen behavior, is intertwined with the civic culture shaped by socio-cultural dimensions. This culture can be activated through communication processes and media. Communication fosters collectivity, solidarity, a moral voice, and high-context expressions, encouraging citizens to strengthen their commitment to achieving the common good in line with evolving values. The behavioral patterns observed in Indonesian civic life also reflect a social cohesion that can reinforce the role and position of citizens. This has been done by the civic community through its activities communicating ideas or messages to encourage civic engagement, based on the context of Indonesian culture. Thus, this communication is concerned with strengthening the attribution of citizenship while transmitting civic culture.

Collectivity in Indonesian society is reflected in its communal context, which emphasizes togetherness and mutual consensus through cooperation. This is manifested by achieving the common good rather than prioritizing individual interests. Solidarity is demonstrated through a sense of togetherness, expressed as generosity and support, both material and moral. The moral voice is reflected in civic engagement, which is not only about achieving the common good but also about the necessity of voicing moral aspirations, especially concerning togetherness as a collective responsibility affirmed by citizens. High-context communication is characterized by its reliance on context and situation, attention to non-verbal expressions, and emphasis on implicit symbolic communication. The role of communication in citizenship is a crucial aspect of civic communication studies.

The study of citizenship communication cannot actually be separated from the context of the realization of social capital in communicating the narrative of citizenship issues so that it becomes a common concern of citizens through networking and collaboration.

FI as a community activist mentioned that:

“Collaboration emphasizes the role of others, especially the emotional side related to common issues felt by the community through empowerment and the use of communication media”.

Meanwhile, RA conveyed:

“Collaboration and empowerment between citizens in solving social problems through non-exclusive communities by emphasizing alignment on common issues for the common good as well as as a way to echo what is voiced”.

The context of this communication is in line with communication among citizens in strengthening the attribution and transmission of value in the form of social capital. Social capital can be in the form of social networks, mutual norms, and trust to achieve the good along with the dimension of close relationships within groups and the connection of individuals for integration through a network (Putnam, 2000) which reflects cooperation for collective action where it is inseparable from behavior and motivation (Claridge, 2018) in the form of relationships between individuals, social networks, trust, and reciprocity in an equal, tolerant, solidarity with communal and community spirit (Mulyono et al., 2022). Communication and civic education provide the perspective that social capital is not born spontaneously, but is constructed through a communication process that produces trust, common norms, social networks, and collective identities, especially from community activity.

Communication between citizens can develop into trust, norms of reciprocity, social networks, and ultimately collective action. Thus, civic communication is understood not only as a process of exchanging messages about public issues, but also as a mechanism for the production and reproduction of social capital that enables citizens to engage in democratic life. Social capital can be placed as a social basis that enables the communication process to take place effectively. Such as *Bareng Warga* Community and *Nusa Bumi Lestari* Community which collaborate and build networks with other stakeholders so that the stated goals can be achieved. The collaboration and networking built by *Bareng Warga* is conducted with other communities related to shared visions and values, while *Nusa Bumi Lestari* does it with other stakeholders such as government officials, educational institutions, and other community elements. These activities are carefully carried out by utilizing technological advances in the form of digital platforms accompanied by direct involvement activities.

Communication gives meaning to citizens' actions through communities, which provide legitimacy, solidarity, and trust. Effective communication strengthens the dissemination of ideas and information, fostering knowledge, shaping attitudes, and developing the character of citizens. The denser the communication network, the greater the social capital formed. Thus, communication also provides a fulcrum for social relations that can result in collective action based on reciprocity, encouraging citizens to cooperate under a bond of common identity without always relying on formal contracts. Furthermore, the communication process in citizenship provides common meaning, shared values, and common hopes. This underscores that citizenship is not only legal-formal but also manifested in the actions and social context of citizens.

Community activities carried out by *Nusa Bumi Lestari* and *Bareng Warga* involve persuading citizens to participate through digital and social media. This study revealed that *Nusa Bumi Lestari* uses kitabisa.com as a crowdfunding platform, while *Bareng Warga* actively uses change.org as a platform for channeling political voice. *Nusa Bumi Lestari* emphasizes environmental awareness while *Bareng Warga* promotes political advocacy issues. Both also use Instagram to disseminate ideas and as a means of communication between citizens.

For civic communication to provide meaning and a reflective nature for citizens, the communication process must be carried out persuasively, not dogmatically. This reflective meaning encourages active citizen participation, rooted in knowledge, attitudes, dispositions, motivations, and values, to ensure quality, committed, and dedicated engagement. Through this strategy, citizens will attribute and appreciate values that are not doctrinal in nature.

As stated by AB:

“Persuasion is the most appropriate way to influence public psychology to elicit a response from the public. Persuasion tends to manage messages to generate impressions that build perceptions and behaviors.”.

MF emphasized that:

“Persuasion is a communication activity that aims to change attitudes, opinions, and behaviors. Through persuasion, a message is conveyed in accordance with the communication's purpose and is oriented toward the audience, in this case, the public or citizens.”.

Observations of civic community activities show that persuasive communication is used to strengthen citizen attribution and value transmission, which then transforms citizens' actions. The persuasive communication activities carried out by the community focus on ethos as the source, logos as the message, and pathos as the audience's emotions. In detail,

ethos is demonstrated by positioning the community as a credible source that invites citizens to become involved in the issues raised. Logos is demonstrated by conveying messages that strengthen citizen attribution. Meanwhile, pathos is related to framing messages in the form of narratives that can trigger emotional connections for citizens.

Bareng Warga, for example, used satirical narratives as a form of persuasive communication with the sentences: “*menarik pajak tanpa timbal balik untuk rakyat adalah sebuah kejahatan; jangan minta pajak besar kalau belum becus melayani rakyat; tolak PPN 12%*” or “*males mandi, soalnya sabunnya kena PPN 12%*”. This campaign successfully encouraged citizen participation through change.org petitions, which rejected policies, and Instagram posts, which attracted public attention to the issues raised. The communication also allowed citizens to express their opinions by writing comments in response to the issues. This approach created a sense of urgency and significance, fostered emotional connections, activated collective pressure, and encouraged a sense of ownership and identification with shared problems.

While *Nusa Bumi Lestari*, used persuasive storytelling as a form of persuasive communication with the sentences: “*alirkan pahala dengan sedekah pohon untuk lingkungan*”. This is conveyed through storytelling that highlights the program's urgency and invites donations. This is achieved through education and persuasion, which then covert into action on environmental issues. These activities reinforce interactions among citizens in preserving the environment, in line with the issues raised.

Table 1. The Ethos, Pathos, and Logos Framework of Community Activities

Community	Ethos	Logos	Pathos
<i>Bareng Warga</i>	Utilization of the change.org platform, mass media, and social media	Data-driven persuasive messages and satirical narratives	Emotional connections foster sensitivity and channel aspirations
<i>Nusa Bumi Lestari</i>	Utilization of the kitabisa.com platform, community websites, and social media	Featuring persuasive storytelling and informative narratives	Emotional connection, sensitivity, caring, volunteerism, generosity, and educational

Source: Research Results (2026)

Community Activities with Citizens serves as a forum for political expression, while the *Nusa Bumi Lestari* Community fosters civic activity through persuasive strategy. These strategy aim to persuade and influence public attention toward specific issues, tailored to the community's characteristics. The selection of these issues highlights the urgency of engagement, communicated through carefully chosen messages and channels.

Persuasive communication emphasizes the citizens' encouragement to have attribution that will provide the common good and nurture the values transmitted. Persuasive communication emphasizes the power of argument as a symbolic process in convincing others to change attitudes or behaviors about a problem through the transmission of messages in an atmosphere of freedom of choice (Perloff, 2020). Persuasion is in principle an act of communication that is shown to change or strengthen the attitudes, beliefs, and behavior of the audience voluntarily based on the reasons given by the communicator (Venus, 2019). Persuasive communication rhetoric was born out of the need to educate citizens on persuasive techniques and ethics with an emphasis on the responsibilities that come with the right to express opinions in a democracy with respect to the habits and skills of citizen involvement, the meaning of good citizenship, as well as as as ethical

communicators (Hogan, 2013). Persuasive communication is inherent in citizenship based on the context of efforts to influence citizens to be willing to be involved in solving common issues and to achieve the common good and efforts to maintain civic values.

A persuasive communication approach can transmit civic values and encouraging them to attribute various civic activities. Therefore, civic communication needs to be understood as a persuasive process that connects citizens' messages, cultural values, and participatory actions. Persuasive communication, encompassing ethos, logos, and pathos, can serve as a trigger for values, motivation, and commitment in various contexts, including the use of public space, the creation of public opinion, the use of media convergence, and the connection of media ecology. Strategies to achieve this involve narrative storytelling, social proof in the form of data, and visuals as implementations of persuasive communication. Furthermore, Indonesian citizen culture is an integral determinant in shaping the context of persuasive communication to foster dedicated and committed citizens, impacting their cognitive, affective, and conative aspects.

Civic communication mitigates digital polarization when citizens' communicative practices, dialogue, storytelling, social verification, and the mobilization of collective action, operate within a collective culture. This transforms the digital public sphere from an arena of identity competition into one of civic collaboration. Such a collective culture, by shaping civic communication, builds a deliberative, inclusive, and common-interest-oriented digital public sphere, thereby reducing digital polarization.

In Indonesia context, digital polarization stems not only from social media algorithms but also from weakened social capital, fragmented public spaces, and the low quality of intergroup dialogue. Therefore, civic communication grounded in a collective culture can serve as a social mechanism for rebuilding a deliberative public sphere. It fosters shared meaning, strengthens social bonds, and facilitates dialogue across differences.

This context concerns the reduction of polarization in the digital space. Civic communication can achieve this by: meaningful cross-identity dialogue which creating conversation spaces between different groups; social verification which enabling communities to become mechanisms for checking information; building public empathy which using storytelling to foster understanding of shared experiences; and collaborative mobilization which directing citizens' energy toward solving shared problems. While civic communication provides the communicative mechanism, collective culture offers the normative foundation. This dual approach is reflected in efforts to strengthen citizen attribution and transmit values through civic communication.

Basically, figure 1 presented that civic communication synthesizes civic education and communication, functioning as a socio-cultural mechanism. It shapes meaning, transmits civic values, strengthens civic culture, and encourages citizen participation through persuasive, deliberative, and participatory strategies. By leveraging public spaces, opinion formation, and media convergence, civic communication links the active role of citizens with the practice of deliberative democracy. This enables citizens to develop as civic agents capable of interacting, collaborating, and acting collectively to achieve the common good.

Civic education provides the normative and educational foundation for cultivating citizens who possess the characteristics of smart and good citizen, while communication contributes the processes through which information, ideas, and messages are exchanged to produce meaning and contextual understanding. Civic communication emerges at the intersection of these two domains, functioning as an interdisciplinary bridging endeavor that connects the scientific traditions of communication and civic education and extends their

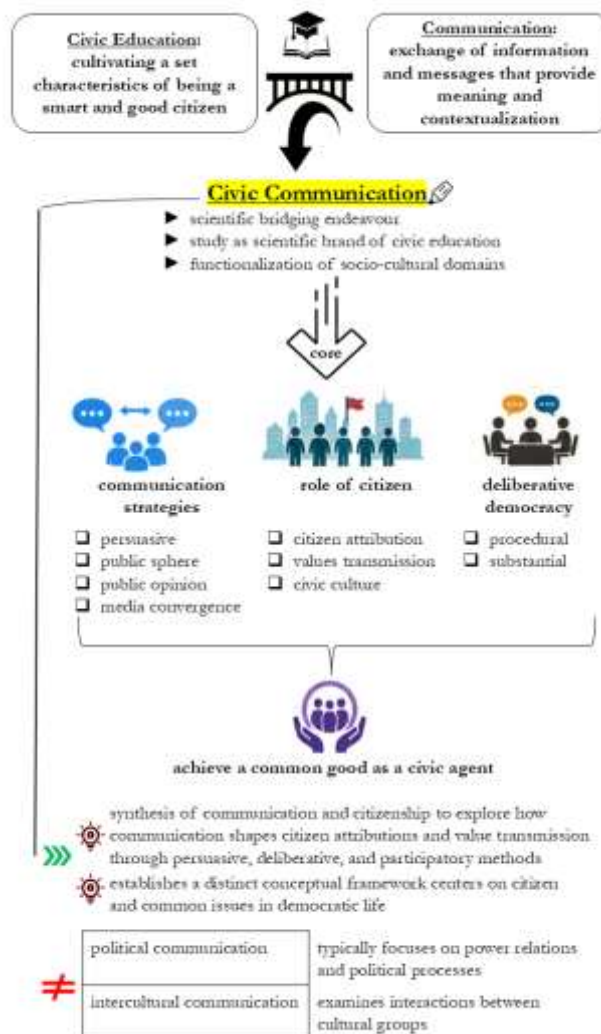
analysis into the socio-cultural domain of civic education. The figure shows the three interconnected pillars of civic communication: communication strategies, the role of citizens, and deliberative democracy.

First, communication strategies refer to the ways civic messages and ideas are communicated and negotiated, including persuasive communication, the creation of a public sphere, public opinion formation, and media convergence. These strategies provide the communicative mechanisms through which citizens articulate concerns, construct meanings, mobilize support, and participate in public issues. Second, the role of citizens emphasizes the citizen as an active subject rather than merely a recipient of civic information. This pillar encompasses attribution, values, and culture, which shape citizens' willingness and capacity to participate in addressing shared concerns. Third, deliberative democracy provides the democratic context in which communication takes place, emphasizing procedural, consensual, and substantive dimensions of democratic participation. Through deliberative processes, communication becomes a means of exchanging reasons, negotiating differences, and seeking collectively acceptable solutions.

The three pillars are not intended to operate independently. Rather, their integration constitutes the core of civic communication. Communication strategies provide the means of interaction, citizens provide the actors and civic-cultural resources, and deliberative democracy provides the democratic normative and procedural framework within which interaction occurs. Their intersection therefore transforms communication from a mere process of information exchange into a civic practice oriented toward participation, dialogue, democratic negotiation, and the pursuit of shared interests. The integration of these dimensions ultimately leads to the formation of civic agents oriented toward the common good. In this sense, civic communication is concerned not only with how citizens communicate, but also with how communication enables them to develop capacities in public deliberation, and collectively respond to societal problems. The outcome is therefore a citizen who is capable of acting communicatively and democratically in pursuit of the common good.

At the bottom of the figure, civic communication is further distinguished from related concepts. Political communication typically focuses on power relations, political actors, and political processes, whereas intercultural communication primarily examines interaction across cultural groups. Civic communication, by contrast, brings communication and citizenship into a socio-cultural and democratic framework, emphasizing how communicative practices can cultivate civic agency and facilitate collective action for the common good. Thus, the conceptual contribution of Figure 1 lies in positioning civic communication as a field that synthesizes communication and civic education through persuasive, deliberative, and participatory processes.

Figure 1 Civic Communication as Study of Civic Education



Source: Research Results, 2026

The study of civic communication, as a field of civic education, aims to strengthen citizen attributes and transmit values through a persuasive approach and the functionalization of the socio-cultural domain. This can be transformed or adapted for formal civic education through the curricular domain. This means that civic communication, drawn from community practices, should transcend mere findings on citizen communication patterns and utilize media. Instead, it can be developed into learning resources, content, pedagogy, and civic experiences, thereby transforming classroom learning into a dynamic environment for civic education. This connects to the context that technological determinism in education, specifically in civic education, may preclude emancipatory critical awareness (Feriyanasyah et al., 2026). At a minimum, integrating civic communication into the civic education curriculum can mitigate this.

Communities are not merely objects of civics education but can also serve as sources of civic knowledge and laboratories for civic practice. Through communication, citizens identify public issues, build shared meaning, and establish legitimacy. They then persuasively engage other citizens by shaping public opinion and mobilizing participation, thereby achieving the common good. This is particularly urgent in civic education, where learning

extends beyond “learning about” to encompass “learning in” and “learning for” achieving quality civic practice. Therefore, civic education will provide citizens with a meaningful understanding of their roles and positions in communal life. This also relates to the concepts of authenticity and ontological civic education, which complement each other by developing individuals into citizens with a deep understanding of themselves, social responsibility, and the meaning of existence when facing the challenges of globalization and global change (Feriyansyah & Murtiningsih, 2024). This will also provide meaning for the implementation of civic education in creating smart and good citizens.

Practically and pedagogically, this can take the form of project-based or community-based approaches that present contextual, factual, and actual citizenship issues. This aims to internalize civic competence through solving real-life problems. Therefore, civic communication can serve as a bridge for strengthening citizenship practices related to transforming community socio-cultural practices into curricular knowledge and experiences. Schematically, the community becomes a learning resource, communication becomes a learning mechanism, and citizens' attributions in achieving the common good become learning outcomes.

In essence, the above context concerns how community civics is practiced as a form of socio-cultural functionalization within civic education. This approach does not deviate from the implementation of civic education studies; rather, it enriches them as a form of civic practice in shaping smart and good citizen. Civic communication, as an epistemic and pedagogical mechanism, transforms community sociocultural practices into curricular knowledge and experiences.

CONCLUSION

Civic communication is a distinct field within civic education that synthesizes the study of civic education and communication. It explains how citizens construct meaning, internalize civic values, and translate them into participatory action for the common good. Rather than reducing citizenship to legal-formal status or political processes, civic communication highlights the sociocultural and communicative processes through which citizenship is cultivated, negotiated, and enacted in everyday public life. Its substantive contribution lies in connecting persuasive, deliberative, and participatory communication with the realization of deliberative democracy, particularly through the functionalization of public spaces, opinion formation, media convergence, and community networks.

The novelty of civic communication lies in its conceptual positioning as distinct from political communication, which primarily examines power relations and political processes, and intercultural communication, which focuses on communication across cultural differences. Civic communication instead examines how communicative processes shape civic identity, transmit citizenship values, and foster collective engagement. Within this framework, persuasive strategies based on ethos, logos, and pathos operate through storytelling, social proof, and visual communication, while simultaneously interacting with and transforming civic culture. Thus, persuasion is not merely a technique for influencing individuals but a contextual civic process through which citizens develop self-efficacy, negotiate shared meanings, build solidarity, and mobilize collective action.

Theoretically, this perspective extends persuasive communication by demonstrating that the meaning and effectiveness of persuasion are shaped by the context of citizenship and the pursuit of the common good. Practically, civic communication provides a foundation for empowering civic communities by strengthening public spaces and communicative

networks that enable citizens to interact, collaborate, deliberate, and act collectively. Accordingly, civic communication should be integrated into community-based civic education as a strategic framework for developing intelligent, participatory, and socially responsible citizens. Future efforts should focus on developing contextual and persuasive civic communication models that strengthen citizens' self-efficacy and facilitate meaningful participation in addressing shared public concerns and advancing the common good..

The recommendations from this research are: (1) to integrate civic communication studies into the community civics framework to foster smart and good citizen; (2) to develop and implement a persuasive, practical, and contextual civic communication model that affirms citizens' self-efficacy and encourages their involvement in achieving the common good.

DECLARATIONS

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Conceptualization: YP; Methodology: YP and AA; Formal Analysis: YP, AA, and NS; Investigation: YP and AA; Writing - Original Draft Preparation: YP; Writing - Review and Editing: YP; Supervision: YP; Project Administration: YP, AA, and NS. All authors have read and agree to the final published version of the manuscript.

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The authors do not have any potential conflict of interest to disclose.

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During the preparation of this work, the authors used ChatGPT in order to provide an overview of contextualization of the research to be conducted, and used Editgpt to review and edit text according to linguistic rules. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the published article.

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