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DIGITAL AND DOMESTIC ECOSYSTEMS: THE POLITICAL POLARIZATION OF GENERATION Z IN CYBERSPACE AND THE CONVERGENCE OF FAMILY AUTHORITY

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ABSTRAK

Transformasi digital mengubah cara informasi politik masuk ke dalam percakapan keluarga. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana paparan politik digital mahasiswa Generasi Z dinegosiasikan dengan otoritas orang tua dalam keluarga di Kota Singaraja. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus tunggal berunit tertanam. Data dihimpun pada Agustus 2026 melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap 12 informan yang dipilih secara *purposive* (empat mahasiswa PPKn, tiga orang tua yang membentuk tiga pasangan anak–orang tua, dua dosen PPKn, satu akademisi, dan dua penyelenggara pemilu), pengamatan linimasa media sosial, serta dokumentasi percakapan grup WhatsApp keluarga yang telah disamarkan, kemudian dianalisis dengan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: (1) paparan politik yang selaras dengan preferensi pengguna terdokumentasi kuat pada dua dari empat mahasiswa (71–72% unggahan politik), sedangkan dua mahasiswa lain menerima paparan yang lebih beragam; (2) pembelajaran politik dari anak kepada orang tua teridentifikasi pada dua keluarga, berupa perubahan praktik verifikasi informasi dan penerimaan terhadap perbedaan pilihan, tanpa bukti perubahan pilihan elektoral, sedangkan satu keluarga menjadi kasus berlawanan; serta (3) musyawarah hibrid yang memadukan grup WhatsApp dan percakapan tatap muka muncul pada dua keluarga, sementara informan lain membatasi atau menghentikan pembicaraan politik. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa otoritas keluarga tidak hilang, tetapi dinegosiasikan secara berbeda antarkeluarga. Temuan ini dapat menjadi bahan awal pengembangan pendidikan kewarganegaraan digital berbasis keluarga yang masih perlu diuji lebih lanjut.

ABSTRACT

Digital transformation has changed how political information enters family conversations. This study examines how the digital political exposure of Generation Z university students is negotiated with parental authority in families in Singaraja City, Bali. A qualitative single case study with embedded units was employed. Data were collected in August 2026 through in-depth interviews with 12 purposively selected informants (four civic education students, three parents forming three parent–child pairs, two civic education lecturers, one academic, and two election administrators), observation of social media timelines, and anonymised documentation of family WhatsApp conversations, and were analysed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The results show that: (1) exposure aligned with users' own preferences was clearly documented for two of the four students (71–72% of political posts), whereas the other two encountered more varied content; (2) upward political learning from child to parent was identified in two families, in the form of changed information-verification practices and greater acceptance of political disagreement, with no evidence of changes in electoral choice, while a third family provided a contrasting case; and (3) hybrid deliberation combining family WhatsApp groups and face-to-face conversation emerged in two families, whereas other informants restricted or closed political discussion.

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The study concludes that family authority is not lost but is negotiated in different ways across families. These findings offer a preliminary basis for developing family-oriented digital citizenship education, which requires further testing.

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1. Introduction

Indonesia's 2024 elections took place in an information environment in which social media had become a primary channel of political information for young citizens. Generation Z made up 24.94% of the domestic voter list for the 2024 General Election, second only to millennials (33.44%) (KPU RI, n.d.), and many members of this cohort encounter politics first through platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and X. This study does not examine these broad demographic and technological shifts as such. It focuses on a narrower question that they raise within the household: what happens when political information that young people obtain through digital platforms enters family conversations in which parents have traditionally held moral authority over political discussion. This question matters for civic education because the family remains one of the first settings in which young citizens learn how to disagree, give reasons, and decide whom to trust.

Studies of digital political communication often explain the homogenising tendency of online environments through two concepts. Sunstein (2001) describes the *echo chamber* as an environment in which users mainly encounter opinions that reinforce those they already hold, while Pariser (2011) uses the term *filter bubble* for the narrowing of exposure produced by personalised recommendation systems. Empirical research, however, indicates that these mechanisms should not be assumed to operate uniformly. Exposure to cross-cutting content is shaped at least as much by users' own choices as by ranking algorithms (Bakshy et al., 2015); people with diverse media diets and strong political interest are less likely to be enclosed in echo chambers (Dubois & Blank, 2018); and the available evidence does not justify strong claims about the effects of filter bubbles (Zuiderveen Borgesius et al., 2016). This study therefore treats algorithmic personalisation as one possible contributor to repeated political exposure, alongside users' own selection behaviour, and does not attempt to verify how any platform algorithm operates.

On the other hand, long before the country's founding, Indonesian society had inherited a mechanism of collective deliberation known as deliberation for consensus, a tradition that was later crystallized as the fourth precept of Pancasila: "Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives". These values of deliberation, kinship, and mutual cooperation do not only operate at the state level, but live in the smallest social unit, the family, where important decisions, including political views and choices are traditionally discussed, negotiated, and agreed upon under the moral authority of parents or family elders.

The problem is that Generation Z's digital culture has procedures for obtaining and validating truth that differ from those of family deliberation. Family deliberation presupposes face-to-face exchange, an age-based hierarchy of authority, and time for reflection, whereas digital culture offers rapid validation through likes and virality, self-selected online communities, and authority distributed among public figures on screen. To analyse this encounter, the study uses the term *convergence of family authority* as a sensitising concept that draws on three bodies of work. First, Bourdieu's notions of field and habitus (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) suggest that the family and the digital space are distinct fields with their own forms of capital, which intersect in young people who belong to both. Second, research on parental authority shows that adolescents and parents judge the legitimacy of parental authority differently across domains of life (Smetana, 1995), so authority can be partially shared rather than simply held or lost. Third, studies of political socialization have documented trickle-up influence, in which children shape

their parents' political attention, knowledge, or participation (Dahlgaard, 2018; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002), and studies of family technology use show that children often teach their parents how to use digital media (Correa, 2014). Building on these strands, convergence of family authority is defined here as the meeting of domestic authority grounded in age, experience, and deliberative norms with digital competence grounded in the ability to search for, verify, and interpret online information. Empirically, it is examined through three observable dimensions: who is recognised as a credible source on a given issue; whether political learning moves from child to parent as well as from parent to child; and whether disagreements are processed through the exchange of reasons or closed through avoidance or command.

International studies of digital political polarization generally depart from the framework *of echo chambers* and *filter bubbles* (Sunstein, 2001; Pariser, 2011), which emphasizes how the algorithmic architecture of digital platforms forms a homogeneous information environment. Meanwhile, studies on the family and cultural capital are largely built on Bourdieu's framework of habitus, capital, and realm (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990); recent research reaffirms the role of the family as the primary domain of habitus formation (Schäfer, 2025) while showing that family cultural capital influences individual achievement through habitus and realm mechanisms in stages (Jin et al., 2026).

In Indonesia, research on Generation Z and politics has focused a lot on media patterns and electoral participation. Evita (2023) found that Generation Z is very active in seeking political information through social media and views politics as a vehicle for social change. Tinambunan et al. (2024) and Hutajulu et al. (2024) emphasized that digitalization has significantly changed the political behavior and culture patterns of the younger generation. The study of local values in the digital era shows worrying symptoms: Susanto et al. (2025) document the fading of the value of deliberation and mutual cooperation among Generation Z due to the homogenization of global culture through digital media, while Agustin and Akmaluddin (2024) offer the *"Digital Deliberation 4.0"* model as an effort to integrate the value of consensus deliberation into the digital space to reduce polarization.

Although these studies have made important contributions, most of them treat social media as a variable that shapes political participation or voting behavior (Evita, 2023; Tinambunan et al., 2024), or treat the value of deliberation as an object of cultural study separate from the dynamics of authority within families (Agustin & Akmaluddin, 2024; Susanto et al., 2025). International work on trickle-up socialization, meanwhile, is largely quantitative and has measured outcomes such as turnout or political knowledge rather than the conversational sequences through which influence is accepted, limited, or refused (Dahlgaard, 2018; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002). As far as the author is aware, few studies have examined, at the level of concrete family interactions, how digital political information is negotiated between Generation Z children and their parents in a local Indonesian cultural setting, particularly in medium-sized cities such as Singaraja, which has historically been known as a port city and a meeting point of cultures since the colonial period (Arta et al., 2021) but rarely features as a locus of digital political research.

This research offers an integrative perspective by combining four frameworks: *Digital Political Ecology* to understand the architecture of digital space as an ecosystem that shapes political behavior; Political Socialization to understand family, social media, and peers as agents of shaping political attitudes; Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus, capital, and realm to understand how political authority and disposition are reproduced and negotiated across generations in the family; and the idea of Indonesian deliberative democracy rooted in deliberation for consensus. The integration of these four perspectives is expected to explain not only how Generation Z experiences repeated political exposure in cyberspace, but also how family authority as the oldest deliberative institution in Indonesia adapts, negotiates, or is actually eroded by the digital ecosystem.

Based on this description, the study addresses three questions: (a) how Generation Z students in Singaraja City describe and experience repeated political exposure on social media; (b) how this digital exposure enters family conversations and how parental authority is negotiated in response; and (c) under what conditions these negotiations take the form of hybrid deliberation that combines online and face-to-face exchanges of reasons, and under what

conditions they end in avoidance or the closure of political discussion. Accordingly, the intended contribution is analytical rather than prescriptive: the study seeks to clarify the mechanisms and variations of family authority negotiation in a single local case and to identify implications for civic education that can be tested in further research.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with an interpretive orientation, seeking to understand the meanings that informants construct from their experience of digital political information and family authority rather than testing hypotheses formulated in advance (Creswell, 2013). A case study design was chosen because the research questions concern how, and under what conditions, political information enters family conversations and authority is negotiated. These processes cannot be separated from their context, namely family relationships, norms of politeness, platform use, and the sequence of interactions, which is the type of situation for which case study designs are recommended (Yin, 2018). The study is operationalised as a single case study with embedded units. The case is the negotiation of political authority within a network of civic education (PPKn) students at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha and their families in Singaraja, bounded by the data collection period of 12–31 August 2026. The embedded units are episodes of digital and domestic interaction in three families (K1, K2, and K3) and the experience of one student whose parents were not interviewed. Informants' experiences of the 2024 General Election and regional elections were treated as retrospective recollections, whereas timeline observation and the documentation of family conversations took place in August 2026; observations made in 2026 were not used to reconstruct algorithmic exposure or voting behaviour in 2024.

The research is located in Singaraja City, Buleleng Regency, Bali Province. The selection of this location is based on the consideration that Singaraja has a distinctive socio-cultural character as a port city and a crossover of cultures since the Dutch colonial period (Arta et al., 2021), as well as having an adequate Generation Z population and relevant local political dynamics to be studied, but relatively rarely as a research locus compared to major cities in Indonesia.

Informants were selected purposively and comprise 12 people in five categories (Table 1). The experiential core of the case consists of four PPKn students aged 19–22 years (M1–M4) and three parents (OT1–OT3). Three of the students and the three parents form parent–child pairs (K1: M1–OT1; K2: M2–OT2; K3: M4–OT3), which allowed the same episodes to be examined from the perspectives of both generations; M3 was included as a student whose parents were not interviewed. The inclusion criteria for students were active use of social media to access political content for at least two hours a day, involvement in online political discussion, and willingness to confirm their data. Because these criteria select relatively intensive users, the findings apply most directly to this group. The other five informants provided contextual and interpretive accounts rather than additional cases of family experience: two PPKn lecturers (D1, D2) explained how deliberation and digital literacy are taught in civic education; one political sociologist (AP1) was asked to assess alternative interpretations of authority and habitus; and two election administrators, a commissioner of the Buleleng General Elections Commission (PP1) and a member of the Buleleng Election Supervisory Agency (PP2), provided context on young voters, the supervision of digital campaigns, and disinformation. Their accounts were not used as evidence of what occurred within the families studied. Voting eligibility in 2024 was not an inclusion criterion, so students' references to the 2024 elections are treated as recollections of the campaign environment rather than as evidence of their own voting behaviour. The sample is not intended to be statistically representative of Generation Z; its adequacy was assessed by the completeness of interaction episodes, cross-confirmation between sources, and the presence of contrasting cases rather than by a claim of data saturation.

Table 1. Profile of Research Informants (*Purposive Sampling*)

Informant Code	Category Information	Age	Information Focus & The Role of Data

M1 - M4	PPKn Undiksha Students (Gen Z)	19–22 Years	Digital media consumption patterns, political preferences, dynamics of cyber and domestic interactions.
D1 - D2	PPKn Lecturer FHIS Undiksha	42–50 Years	Perspectives on political pedagogy, digital literacy, and the internalization of Pancasila values.
OT1 - OT3	Parents / Heads of Families in Singaraja (paired with M1, M2, M4)	48–56 Years	Domestic authority, family leadership, family deliberation practice.
AP1	Political Academics & Sociology	45 Years	Analysis of sociometric structures, the reproduction of Bourdieu's habitus, and the ecology of digital politics.
PP1 - PP2	Election Organizer (KPU & Bawaslu Buleleng)	40–48 Years	Data on the dynamics of novice voters, digital campaign regulation, and local polarization mitigation.

Data were collected through three techniques between 12 and 31 August 2026. First, in-depth interviews explored informants' perceptions and experiences of digital political information and family authority. Parents and children in each pair were interviewed separately, and follow-up questions asked whether changes had begun before the conversations in question, whether other people had influenced them, and whether children had also followed their parents' explanations. Second, observation covered students' social media timelines and family interactions. Timeline observation consisted of two sessions per student on their usual accounts; in each session, 20 consecutively displayed posts were recorded before being classified as political or non-political, and political posts were then classified as aligned with, opposed to, or neutral toward the preference each student reported in the interview (F01–F04). Short observations of face-to-face family conversations were also recorded (OBS-A to OBS-C). Third, documentation consisted of dated excerpts from three family WhatsApp groups (WA-A, WA-B, and WA-C), relevant political posts, and official election documents. Group names, telephone numbers, and real political identities were removed from all excerpts.

The credibility of the data was maintained through source triangulation (comparing the accounts of students, parents, and contextual informants), technique triangulation (comparing interviews, observation, and dated documents), member checking (reconfirming interpretations with informants), and peer debriefing. Within each parent–child pair, accounts of change were checked against dated messages and subsequent actions; where only a retrospective account was available, the result is reported as a change reported by the informant. Contrasting cases were deliberately retained in the analysis. Because the student informants study in the programme with which the research team is affiliated, their accounts may have been influenced by social desirability; this risk was addressed by interviewing parents separately, comparing accounts with dated records, and reporting contrasting cases. Informants agreed to participate and to the use of their data in anonymised form, and excerpts from family groups were used only after names, numbers, and political identities had been removed.

The data were analysed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which comprises data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During condensation, data were coded with operational codes, including repeated exposure aligned with preference (PAP-HOM), changes in parents' verification practices (RS-VER), parents' recognition of children's political autonomy (RS-OTON), attempts at influence without demonstrable change (RS-BATAS), management of differences through private communication (NEG-PRIV), hybrid deliberation (MUS-HIB), and topic closure (HENTI-TOPIK). Hybrid deliberation was coded only when reasons were exchanged across online and face-to-face settings and led to a correction, rule, or follow-up recognised by participants; peace stickers, read messages, or silence in a group were not sufficient. During display, the codes were organised in an informant-by-pattern matrix (Table 2) that distinguishes direct support, partial support,

contrasting cases, contextual interpretation, and unavailable data. Conclusions were then verified against this matrix and the original records.

Table 2. Distribution of Evidence Across Informants and Patterns

Informant	Unit	P1 Repeated aligned exposure	P2 Change in parents through interaction with children	P3 Negotiation of authority	P4 Hybrid deliberation	Records
M1	K1	D	D	D	D	W01; WA-A; F01
M2	K2	P	D	D	D	W02; WA-B; F02
M3	Ind.	D	NA	P	C	W03; F03
M4	K3	P	C	P	C	W04; WA-C; F04
OT1	K1	NA	D	D	D	W05; WA-A
OT2	K2	NA	D	D	D	W06; WA-B
OT3	K3	NA	C	C	C	W07; WA-C
D1	Context	I	I	I	I	W08
D2	Context	I	I	I	I	W09
AP1	Context	I	I	I	I	W10
PP1	Context	I	NA	NA	I	W11
PP2	Context	I	NA	NA	I	W12

Note. D = direct experiential support; P = partial support or variation; C = contrasting case; I = contextual interpretation; NA = no relevant data (not counted as contrary evidence). K1–K3 = families; Ind. = student whose parents were not interviewed. W = interview; WA = family WhatsApp record; F = timeline observation.

3. Results and discussion

This section presents the findings in four themes: repeated political exposure in the digital ecosystem of Generation Z; social media as a political socialization agent and upward political learning in the family; negotiations of family authority; and the transformation of family deliberation. For each theme, the number of informants supporting a pattern and the accounts that contrasted with it are reported (Table 2), followed by a discussion of the findings in relation to the theoretical framework.

3.1 Digital Ecosystem Forms Generation Z Echo Chamber in Singaraja City

Repeated exposure to political content aligned with users' preferences was clearly documented for two of the four students (M1 and M3), while the other two (M2 and M4) encountered more varied content (Table 2). The students identified TikTok and Instagram Reels as their most frequently used channels for political content. In the timeline observation, 18 of the 25 political posts recorded on M1's TikTok *For You Page* (72%) and 17 of the 24 political posts on M3's Instagram Explore page (71%) were aligned with their reported preferences. The proportions were lower for M2 (9 of 19 political posts, 47%) and M4 (7 of 16, 44%), each of whom also received five posts expressing opposing views (Figure 1). M1 described the experience as follows:

"Honestly, on TikTok FYP, I have almost 80% of the candidate's debate video clips that have been cut into pieces and given provocative captions that support my chosen candidate. If content appears from the other party, my reflex is to immediately swipe up or click 'not interested'. Over time, my timeline is only full of praise for my candidate. But when discussing on campus with classmates who have different FYPs, we actually have a great debate because the 'video evidence' we watch on TikTok is 180 degrees different."

(Interview with M1, PPKn Undiksha Student, August 12, 2026)

The figure of 80% in M1's account is the informant's own estimate; the timeline observation produced a comparable but lower proportion (72% of political posts and 45% of all recorded posts). The observation notes also show that M1 immediately skipped clips that contradicted the preferred candidate and watched aligned clips for longer, which indicates that the user's own selection behaviour may have contributed to the homogeneity of the feed.

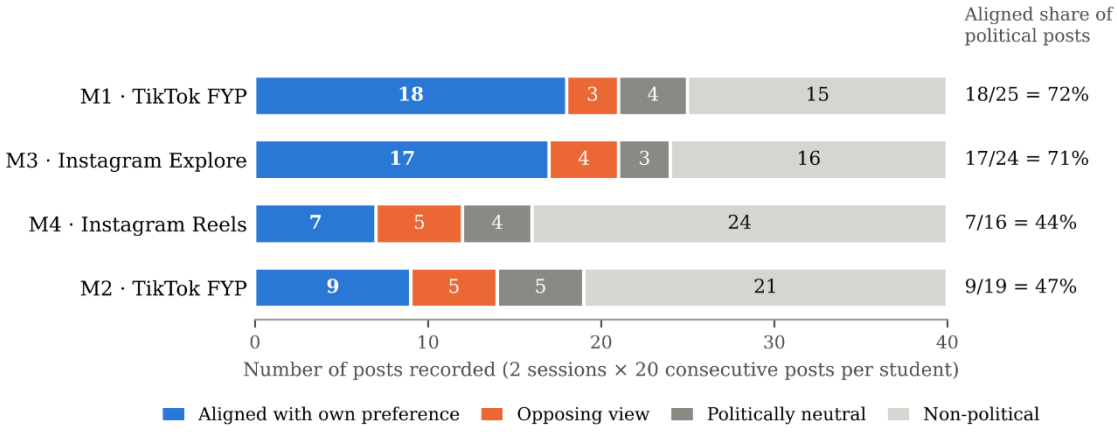

Figure 1. Composition of 40 consecutively recorded timeline posts per student (two sessions of 20 posts, August 2026). Figures on the right show the share of political posts aligned with each student's reported preference.

These patterns are consistent with the concepts of the *echo chamber* (Sunstein, 2001) and the *filter bubble* (Pariser, 2011), but they do not show that algorithms alone produced them. Short observations of ordinary accounts cannot separate the influence of recommendation systems from the accounts that students chose to follow, their friendships, their habits of skipping content, and the salience of particular issues at the time. The contrast between M1 and M3 on the one hand and M2 and M4 on the other is consistent with studies showing that intensive social media use does not necessarily produce homogeneous exposure and that users' own choices play a substantial role (Bakshy et al., 2015; Dubois & Blank, 2018); M2, for example, deliberately opened explanations from accounts with different viewpoints. The finding is therefore formulated as repeated exposure that is perceived and documented, rather than as evidence of how a platform algorithm operates. In Singaraja, aligned content also used local symbols and the Buleleng language in political memes and short clips on local Instagram accounts, which made political narratives feel more personal for the students. M3 added:

"On Instagram and X, if we like one political narrative, the next day the explore column and recommendations for news content are all uniform. As a result, when hanging out at a café in the Penarukan area or the new street of Singaraja, friends are split into two groups that mock each other because each has its own version of the algorithm."

(Interview with M3, PPKn Undiksha Student, August 15, 2026)

From Habermas' (1989) perspective, the digital space should function as an arena of rational deliberation open to all citizens. For M1 and M3, this function appears to be only partly realised: repeated aligned exposure narrowed rather than widened their encounters with different ideas, and both described disagreements with peers that were difficult to resolve because each side relied on different 'evidence'. The experiences of M2 and M4 show that this outcome is not inevitable. The findings are thus consistent with Evita (2023), who found that Generation Z actively seeks political information through social media, while indicating that the breadth of viewpoints encountered varies between users.

Table 3. Framework for Analysis of the Realm of Political Authority: Digital vs. Family

Domain	Authority Sources	Truth Validation Mechanism	Potential Tension
Digital Field	Public figures/*influencers*, recommendation algorithms, FYP trends	Instant validation through content interactions, likes, and virality	Homogeneity of view (*echo chamber*), vulnerability of disinformation, emotional polarization
Family Field	Parents/family elders, patriarchal/hierarchical structures	Face-to-face deliberations, life experiences, age examples	Considered slow to adapt, less relevant to contemporary issues, seniority bias

Table 3 summarises the analytical contrast between the two fields. In the digital field, political authority tends to rest on public figures, recommendation systems, and the virality of content, and validation takes place quickly through interactions and likes. For some of the students, this was associated with repeated exposure to homogeneous views and with vulnerability to misleading content, as illustrated by the edited video clips discussed in the following sections. The family field relies on more deliberative forms of validation, such as discussion and life experience, but faces the challenge of adapting to the speed of digital information.

3.2 Social Media as a New Political Socialization Agent

For the four students in this study, social media functioned not merely as a means of communication but as an important agent of political socialization alongside, and in some respects ahead of, the family, school, and conventional mass media. The students stated that they rarely consumed printed newspapers or national television news when seeking information on the track records of political figures; their political knowledge was built mainly through infographics, explainer videos, and analytical threads on X and TikTok. M2 described this independence as follows:

"I have never watched home TV news or read newspapers. Election information, the track record of candidates for the people's representatives, to the issue of political ethics violations can be full from TikTok and the X thread. Learning in the PPKn class provides the basis for constitutional theory, but I absorb the real political dynamics from social media."
(Interview with M2, PPKn Undiksha Student, August 14, 2026)

These findings reinforce the research results of Hutajulu et al. (2024) and Tinambunan et al. (2024) which affirm that digitalization has significantly changed the behavioral patterns and political culture of Indonesia's young generation.

In Bourdieu's framework, social media can be understood as a field in which symbolic and political capital are contested and redistributed. Students who are skilled at navigating this field acquire forms of cultural capital, such as digital literacy and media fluency, that their parents do not necessarily possess. The family data show that this capital can be converted into political influence within the family, but only in specific domains and not in every family. This study uses the term *upward political learning* for this process, in line with research on trickle-up socialization (McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002) and on bottom-up technology transmission in families (Correa, 2014). Evidence of it was found in two of the three families (K1 and K2), while K3 provided a contrasting case (Table 2). In K1, OT1 described a shift in roles:

"When I was young, the choice of party followed the doctrine of my parents or local traditional leaders. Now the times are the opposite. My son who is studying at Undiksha often scolds me at the dinner table: 'Father, don't believe the writing in the WA group, it's fake news (hoax), you know the official data from the verification web'. In fact, my son taught me how to check the candidate's track record through his cellphone."
(Interview with OT1, Parents of Students, August 18, 2026)

OT1's account is supported by a dated sequence in the family WhatsApp group. On 16 August 2026, OT1 forwarded an edited clip of a political figure's speech received from a relative (WA-A01). M1 pointed out that the clip omitted parts of the full recording (A02), and fourteen minutes later OT1 posted a correction and asked members not to forward the clip (A03). The next morning, the family agreed that political messages should include their source and that corrections should be shared in the same group (A04; OBS-A). On 21 August, before forwarding another video, OT1 asked for the full source and its date (A05). OT1 explained the change in a separate interview:

"Before, messages from relatives were often forwarded straight away because the sender was considered trustworthy. On 16 August, my child showed me that the video clip had lost its explanatory part. After reading the full recording, I corrected the message in the group. On 21 August there was another post; this time I asked for the source before forwarding it. My political choice is the same, but now messages from family also need to be checked."
(Interview with OT1, Parent of M1, August 23, 2026)

M1 confirmed that the visible change concerned verification rather than candidate preference: on 21 August, the parent asked the sender for the full link before M1 had responded (interview with M1, August 23, 2026). In K2, the change took a different form. When OT2 recalled the 2024 elections in the family group and wrote that it felt calmer when all family members made the same choice (B01), M2 proposed discussing the reasons behind different choices in person (B02). After a face-to-face conversation (OBS-B), OT2 wrote in the group that every member may make a different choice and that family closeness is not measured by identical choices (B03); in a later exchange, OT2 asked M2 to explain the reasons and sources behind a new issue before drawing conclusions (B04). OT2 explained:

"In the past, a different choice felt like not following the family. When we talked again about the 2024 experience on 18 August, my child explained that family closeness does not have to be measured by having the same choice. We compared reasons about education and jobs. After that I wrote in the group that every member may differ, as long as there are no insults. In later conversations I ask for my child's reasons first. My own choice has not changed."
(Interview with OT2, Parent of M2, August 26, 2026)

K3 shows the limits of this process. M4 sent clarification links to OT3, first in the family group and then by private message, but OT3 stopped the discussion in the group (C02) and did not respond substantively to the private message (C04). OT3 stated that the links from the child had been read but that 'for political matters, family experience is still trusted more', and that no change in choices or in the way political figures were judged could be shown after the conversation (interview with OT3, August 27, 2026). M3, whose parents were not interviewed, likewise reported no example of parents changing because of the student's explanations. Taken together, the evidence supports a bounded claim. Upward political learning was observed in two families, in the form of changed verification practices (K1) and greater acceptance of political disagreement and of the child's autonomy (K2). In neither family was there evidence of a change in the parent's electoral choice, and alternative explanations, such as the influence of peers or earlier election experiences, cannot be ruled out. As D2 cautioned, the ability to refute information is not in itself sufficient to show a change in parents' politics. The findings therefore indicate the potential for, rather than a completed, transformation of the political habitus of families, in which age seniority is negotiated with the capacity to verify digital information.

3.3 Family Authority Negotiations in the Midst of the Digital Ecosystem

The digital exposure that shapes students' political attitudes did not simply replace family authority; it entered a process of negotiation. None of the three families experienced open confrontation over political differences. Informants linked this restraint to Balinese norms of

politeness between generations, associated with the value of *sor-singgih*; M4, for example, stated that arguing openly with parents is considered impolite according to Balinese custom. Two mechanisms were observed instead: tactical compromise, in which parents accepted their children's autonomy (K1 and K2), and hidden adjustment, in which children maintained their own views while avoiding confrontation (M3 and M4). OT2 explained the limits of domestic authority:

"As parents, we have political tendencies based on family ties in Banjar or senior direction. But children now cannot be strictly controlled as they used to. If we force our will, they verbally nod in front of us, but in the voting booth they still choose according to their digital beliefs. So, we choose to discuss casually without an element of coercion."
(Interview with OT2, Parents of Students, August 20, 2026)

For M3 and M4, responses to differences in political preferences in the family took the form of impression management strategies and passive negotiation. As expressed by Informant M4:

"My father has political choices that are contrary to mine because of the influence of alumni groups and relatives. When it comes to family discussions, I don't want to debate loudly because according to Balinese custom it is impolite to argue with my parents directly at the dinner table. I choose to listen, then periodically send factual news links or clarification videos to my personal WhatsApp. I still respect your authority, but my political autonomy cannot be interfered with."
(Interview with M4, PPKn Undiksha Student, August 22, 2026)

This dynamic can be explained through Bourdieu's concept of the field: the family and the digital space are two fields with different logics and forms of capital that intersect in young people who belong to both. The findings support, qualify, and extend this framework in three ways. First, they support the view that habitus formed in the family remains influential: parents in all three families retained the authority to set the terms of family interaction, including, in K3, the authority to close political discussion. Second, they qualify the assumption, implicit in the theory of social reproduction (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990), that cultural transmission runs mainly from parents to children. In K1 and K2, children's digital capital was recognised by parents and converted into influence over how information was checked and how disagreement was handled, which is consistent with evidence that primary habitus formation can be reciprocal in family practice (Schäfer, 2025) and that family cultural capital operates through mediated rather than direct mechanisms (Jin et al., 2026). Third, the comparison with K3 extends the framework by showing that digital capital does not automatically confer authority: its conversion depends on whether the family field recognises it as legitimate in a particular domain. AP1 described this as authority being divided by domain, with parents continuing to regulate family relations while children are trusted more in checking sources (interview with AP1). This pattern corresponds to the domain-specific legitimacy of parental authority described by Smetana (1995). OT3's insistence that family experience is more trustworthy than online sources can be read as an instance of what Bourdieu (2000) calls hysteresis, in which a habitus formed under earlier conditions persists after the field has changed. These observations suggest that Bourdieu's framework becomes more useful for analysing families in the digital era when the convertibility of digital capital is treated as an empirical question rather than assumed (Ignatow & Robinson, 2017).

3.4 Family Deliberation in the Digital Age: Between Erosion and Adaptation

The value of deliberation, which has historically been a main mechanism of family decision-making in Indonesia, showed signs of both erosion and adaptation in the families studied. M3 reported that political differences at home were usually passed over so that conversations would not drag on, and that the family group was used for schedules and family needs while politics was discussed with friends. Such avoidance is consistent with Susanto et al. (2025), who document the fading of the values of deliberation and mutual cooperation among Generation Z, and with

research showing that people often avoid political talk in everyday settings in order to preserve relationships (Eliasoph, 1998).

At the same time, the data show possibilities of adaptation of the kind proposed in the 'Digital Deliberation 4.0' model of Agustin and Akmaluddin (2024), in which the value of consensus deliberation is integrated into digital mechanisms. In this study, hybrid deliberation is identified when reasons are exchanged across the family WhatsApp group and face-to-face conversation and lead to a correction, rule, or follow-up that participants recognise. Two families met this criterion. In K1, a correction in the group was followed by a breakfast conversation in which the family agreed that political messages should be accompanied by their sources (A03–A04; OBS-A), and the parent later applied this rule (A05). In K2, a disagreement raised in the group was moved to a face-to-face conversation, after which the parent affirmed in the group that each member may make a different choice (B02–B03; OBS-B). These sequences correspond to the view of deliberation as a system in which everyday talk in private settings is connected to wider deliberative processes (Mansbridge, 1999). D1 interpreted the role of Balinese values such as *menyama braya* (kinship and mutual regard among fellow community members) and Pancasila family values in this process as follows:

"Family deliberation does not disappear, but has experienced a dematerialization of form. The deliberation space moved to the family WhatsApp group. That's where the clash of political narratives occurred. Interestingly, Balinese local wisdom such as menyama braya and Pancasila family values act as a 'bumper' or natural brake. When the debate in the WA group starts to heat up, parents or eldest family members usually come in to post peace stickers or reminders that 'politics is temporary, brotherhood is forever'. This is an adaptation of deliberation in the digital era."
(Interview with D1, Lecturer of PPKn Undiksha, August 25, 2026)

D1's account is the interpretation of a contextual informant rather than a direct observation of the families studied, and the documented cases show that not every way of halting conflict can be read as a success of cultural values. In K3, M4's request to check the full source of a video together (C01) was answered by OT3 with an instruction to stop discussing politics in the group (C02). M4 complied in the group and then sent the source by private message, which received no substantive reply (C03–C04), and in a face-to-face conversation two days later OT3 again asked that the topic not be continued (OBS-C). M4 explained that 'silence in the group does not mean agreement' (interview with M4, August 27, 2026). D2 similarly cautioned that stopping a debate may reflect reluctance toward elders rather than acceptance of the other party's reasons. K3 is therefore coded as topic closure rather than hybrid deliberation. The contrast indicates that apparent family harmony can coexist with unequal opportunities to express political disagreement.

The election administrators offered a broader, contextual view. PP1, a commissioner of the Buleleng General Elections Commission, stated:

"The participation rate of Gen Z voters in Buleleng is relatively high. We see that families who are willing to open a space for dialogue and digital deliberation with their young people have proven to be much more resilient in the face of the onslaught of disinformation and political polarization. Digitally adaptive family deliberation is the first bulwark of defense against the threat of electoral division."
(Interview with PP1, Commissioner of KPU Buleleng, August 28, 2026)

PP1's statement is treated as a contextual assessment rather than as statistical evidence. Official records show an overall participation rate of 61.60% in the 2024 Buleleng regent election (KPU Kabupaten Buleleng, 2025), but the documents examined do not provide a participation rate specific to Generation Z, and aggregate turnout cannot establish a relationship at the household level. In a later interview, PP1 noted that exposure to information and active discussion should be distinguished from the use of voting rights and that support for family dialogue was a contextual

view rather than a measured result. PP2 likewise stated that without documentation of cases and their follow-up, it cannot be ascertained whether reminders in family groups reduce disinformation. If resilience is understood here as a family's capacity to stop, verify, and correct misleading political information before it circulates further, the data show this capacity in K1 only, where a misleading clip was corrected (A03) and a later video was withheld until its source could be verified (A05–A06). The study did not measure resilience across families, and the claim that adaptive families are more resilient remains a hypothesis for further research.

Thus, the convergence of family authority in the digital era cannot be understood as a uniform process of either weakening or harmonious adaptation. In this case it took different forms: some families accepted learning from their children, some accepted differences of political choice, and others limited discussion. Hybrid deliberation is one possible outcome of this negotiation, emerging where parents recognise their children's digital competence and where reasons are exchanged across online and face-to-face settings.

4. Conclusions and suggestions

This study concludes that, among the Generation Z students studied in Singaraja City, repeated exposure to political content aligned with their preferences was clearly documented for some users (M1 and M3) but not for others (M2 and M4), and that the observations cannot establish the extent to which platform algorithms, rather than users' own choices, produced this pattern. Within families, students' digital competence enabled upward political learning in two of the three families, in the form of changed verification practices and greater acceptance of disagreement, without evidence of changes in parents' electoral choices; the third family closed political discussion. In line with the research questions, family authority was not replaced by the digital ecosystem but was negotiated in different ways, ranging from hybrid deliberation that combined online and face-to-face exchanges of reasons to the avoidance and closure of political topics.

Theoretically, the study suggests that the classical assumption that political socialization runs from parents to children should be qualified: in the families studied, influence also moved from children to parents, but only in specific domains, such as checking information, and only where parents recognised their children's digital competence as legitimate. Treating the convertibility of digital capital into family authority as an empirical question offers a way to extend Bourdieu's field theory and the literature on trickle-up socialization to the study of families in the digital era. Practically, the findings suggest that digital literacy education should not be limited to detecting hoaxes but should also cultivate the habit of giving reasons and sources in everyday political conversations, including within the family.

On this basis, the study suggests that Pancasila and Citizenship Education could explore family-oriented learning activities that draw directly on the mechanisms observed, for example tasks in which students practise verifying political information together with family members and discuss the reasons for different political choices with them. Such activities should be treated as proposals to be developed and evaluated rather than as a model whose effectiveness has been demonstrated. This study has several limitations: it covers one city and a small number of families; the timeline observations were short and cannot isolate algorithmic effects; experiences of the 2024 elections were recalled retrospectively, and students' eligibility to vote in 2024 was not verified; and the research team's affiliation with the students' study programme may have influenced their accounts. Further research could use longer and more systematic observation, larger and more diverse samples of families, comparisons between urban and rural settings, and generation-specific electoral data to test the patterns identified here.

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