

## ANALYSIS OF UNESA STUDENTS' CIVIC DISPOSITION IN RESPONDING TO CRITICISM AND POLITICAL CONFLICT TOWARD THE GOVERNMENT ON TIKTOK SOCIAL MEDIA

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### Abstrak

#### Keywords:

Civic Disposition,  
Digital Citizenship,  
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TikTok,  
Moral Value.

*The advancement of digital technology has transformed social interaction patterns, including the ways in which citizens engage in political discourse. Following the 2024 Presidential Election, digital platforms such as TikTok have become open arenas for political discussion, yet they are often characterized by verbal conflicts, sarcasm, ridicule, and hate speech directed at the incumbent president and their supporters. In this context, university students are expected to demonstrate a civic disposition that reflects moral integrity and civic values such as tolerance and social responsibility. This study aims to analyze how the civic disposition of students at the State University of Surabaya is manifested in their responses to political conflicts on TikTok. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with active TikTok users among university students and digital observation of political content. The findings are expected to provide insights into the manifestation of civic values in digital spaces and contribute to strengthening Pancasila education in the social media era.*

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### INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes in various aspects of the social, political, and cultural life of Indonesian society. Social media is no longer seen merely as a means of communication or entertainment, but has evolved into a dynamic space for public interaction. Through digital platforms, people can participate in public conversations more broadly and rapidly compared to

conventional media. This transformation demonstrates how digital technology has become an important instrument in shaping modern communication patterns.

The increasing penetration of the internet and the use of social media is particularly evident among the younger generation, especially university students. This group is known as digital natives who are familiar with technology and tend to actively express their views and ideas online. According to Haryanto (2023), social media has now become an arena of public discourse that provides opportunities for every citizen to spread opinions and engage in national issues. This condition further strengthens the role of students as agents of change who have a major influence on the formation of public opinion in the digital sphere.

The growth of digital space also carries consequences for the dynamics of democracy and social life. Social media can encourage more inclusive political participation, but it also has the potential to trigger the spread of hoaxes, polarization, and information bias if not balanced with adequate digital literacy. Several studies, such as those reported by Kominfo (2024), indicate that negative and provocative content in digital spaces increases along with the rise of political issues. Therefore, the existence of social media as a new space for citizen participation must be accompanied by critical awareness and digital ethics so that public contributions, especially from students, remain constructive in national life.

In the context of digital democracy, social media such as TikTok plays a significant role as an arena for discussion and the exchange of political views. This platform does not only function as a space for sharing entertainment, but has also evolved into a highly active arena for political discussion. Every individual can now act as both a producer and a consumer of political information, so the flow of information moves far faster and wider than conventional media. This condition creates opportunities for society to engage more intensely in public discourse, but also opens vulnerabilities to information distortion.

Although freedom of expression in digital spaces is an important part of democracy, political communication practices on TikTok often show an unhealthy side. This freedom is frequently misused for verbal conflict, spreading hate speech, and producing content that attacks certain political groups or figures. The phenomenon of polarization that has become prominent, especially after the 2024 Election, shows how digital spaces can sharpen differences in political views among society. In this situation, digital democracy faces challenges in realizing a rational and ethical public discourse.

The phenomenon of provocative content and mutual ridicule on TikTok after the 2024 Election indicates a decline in the quality of digital political participation in Indonesian society (Prasetyo & Setiawan, 2024). People are more driven by emotion than by substantial analysis of political issues, so political interactions tend to be reactive. In addition, TikTok's algorithm that prioritizes sensational content further strengthens an ecosystem that facilitates political polarization. This situation shows the urgency of stronger digital literacy so that political participation in digital spaces can take place in a healthy, critical, and responsible manner.

Students, as an intellectual group as well as agents of social change, have a moral responsibility to demonstrate good civic disposition in every situation, including within digital space dynamics. Civic disposition, according to Branson (1998), includes various moral attitudes such as tolerance, empathy, social responsibility, and respect for differences in views. These attitudes are not only the foundation of citizenship behavior,

but also indicators of an individual's political maturity in a democratic society. Therefore, students should ideally be able to display ethical communication patterns that reflect these citizenship values.

In practice, civic disposition is needed to build a healthy, balanced political discussion space that emphasizes deliberative principles. Values such as tolerance and empathy are important to prevent extreme polarization, especially when political debates take place in heated situations. This attitude is also in line with Dahl (1998), who emphasizes that democracy requires citizens who are able to engage in rational dialogue and respect different perspectives. Thus, students are not only consumers of information, but also guardians of ethics in political interactions in the public sphere.

However, the reality seen on social media shows that some students are drawn into harsh verbal conflicts that do not reflect ideal citizenship ethics. This phenomenon indicates a gap between theoretical understanding of democratic values and real practices in digital media use. This condition is reinforced by findings from various studies showing that negative emotions often dominate political conversations on social media (Sunstein, 2017). Therefore, strengthening civic disposition becomes an urgent need so that students can serve as examples of responsible, critical digital citizens who continue to uphold ethical values in every interaction.

The condition that some students are involved in verbal conflicts on social media that do not reflect citizenship ethics is reinforced by a report from Kominfo (2024), which noted that around 37% of political content on TikTok during the campaign period was negative and potentially divisive. This pattern not only shows weak social control in cyberspace, but also becomes a serious challenge for citizenship education in forming ethical digital citizens. Civic disposition includes private character (moral responsibility and self-control) and public character (care, obedience to rules, and the ability to compromise). Analyzing UNESA students' responses to criticism and political conflict on TikTok will provide a specific picture of the quality of their digital citizenship amid polarization.

Students as intellectuals and agents of social change have an important role in creating a civilized national life. They are required not only to have broad knowledge, but also good citizenship attitudes (civic disposition) in every action. Civic disposition includes moral values such as tolerance, empathy, social responsibility, and respect for differing views. These values must be applied both in direct interactions in society and in activities in digital spaces. By having strong and ethical character, students can become role models in maintaining social harmony. This attitude is also an important foundation in building democratic and civilized political participation. Ultimately, the character of good citizens will determine the progress and future of the nation.

The phenomenon of increasing student involvement in verbal conflict on social media shows a serious challenge to the application of citizenship ethics in digital spaces. Some students appear immersed in political debates that do not reflect politeness and responsibility as good citizens. Previous studies reveal that the intensity of consuming political content on TikTok can increase students' political knowledge, but this increase is not always followed by the maturity of communication ethics. This condition indicates that critical thinking skills and dialogue ethics have not developed in balance with access to digital political information.

Based on this, this research focuses on students of Universitas Negeri Surabaya (UNESA), which is known to have a system of civic responsibility development for its

students. UNESA was chosen as an important focus to explore how civic disposition values are applied in students' communication activities, especially on social media. Through this research, it is expected that a deeper understanding can be found regarding the extent to which the challenges of the digital era influence the formation of students' citizenship character.

In the context of students' political communication dynamics in digital spaces, particularly on the TikTok platform, this research is directed to examine the quality of civic disposition reflected in how students respond to criticism and political conflict that emerge. Based on this urgency, the research question in this study is: how is the civic disposition of UNESA students reflected in the way they respond to political criticism and conflict on TikTok social media? In line with this research question, the purpose of this study is to analyze how the civic disposition of UNESA students appears in their responses to political criticism and conflict on TikTok as part of their behavior as digital citizens.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. *Civic Disposition in Citizenship Education*

Civic disposition is a fundamental component of civic competence that emphasizes the character and moral attitudes required for responsible citizenship. According to Branson (1998), civic disposition includes values such as tolerance, empathy, social responsibility, respect for diversity, and self-control, which guide citizens in behaving ethically within democratic life. Civic disposition is not only related to what citizens know (civic knowledge) or what they can do (civic skills), but also to how citizens act and respond to social and political issues. In civic education, civic disposition becomes an essential foundation for forming individuals who can participate in society in a responsible and constructive manner.

Branson further divides civic disposition into two dimensions: private character and public character. Private character includes moral responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for the dignity of others. These traits influence how individuals manage their emotions and personal behavior in social interactions. Public character, on the other hand, refers to individuals' willingness to engage in society through caring attitudes, obedience to rules, critical thinking, willingness to listen, and the ability to negotiate and compromise. These public values contribute to maintaining social harmony and building democratic participation.

In the context of students, civic disposition is often associated with their role as intellectuals and agents of change. Students are expected to uphold democratic values both in offline and online spaces. Their civic disposition is reflected in the way they participate in discussions, respond to criticism, and handle conflict. Strengthening civic disposition in citizenship education is therefore crucial, especially in modern democratic societies where political communication increasingly occurs through digital platforms. A strong civic disposition enables students to avoid harmful behaviors such as hate speech, provocation, and intolerance, and instead encourages them to engage in rational dialogue and ethical participation.

### 2. *Civic Competence: Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills, and Civic Disposition*

Civic competence refers to the ability of citizens to participate effectively and responsibly in democratic society. It is commonly classified into three core dimensions: civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition. Branson's framework emphasizes

that these three components must develop together in order to form citizens who are not only informed but also capable and morally responsible. Civic knowledge refers to understanding rights and responsibilities, political systems, and democratic principles. It provides citizens with the conceptual foundation needed to interpret political events and evaluate public policies. Without civic knowledge, citizens may become vulnerable to misinformation and political manipulation.

Civic skills relate to intellectual and participatory abilities that allow citizens to apply knowledge in practice. These include critical thinking, decision-making, communication, problem-solving, and active participation in political and civic life. Rafzan et al. (2020) highlight that civic skills enable individuals to interpret political information wisely and engage with public issues responsibly. In digital spaces, civic skills are demonstrated when individuals verify information, analyze arguments, and engage in constructive dialogue instead of emotional conflict.

Civic disposition represents the attitudes and moral values that guide citizens in practicing democracy ethically. Nurmayanti et al. (2023) state that civic disposition includes tolerance, solidarity, respect for diversity, and sensitivity toward social issues. This component is critical because knowledge and skills alone do not guarantee democratic behavior. Someone may understand democratic principles yet still choose to spread hate or intolerance. Therefore, civic disposition functions as the moral compass of citizenship.

In the context of university students, civic competence becomes increasingly important because students play a role in shaping public discourse. Their civic knowledge influences how they interpret political content; their civic skills determine how they engage in discussion; and their civic disposition shapes whether their engagement promotes ethical dialogue or contributes to conflict. Thus, developing civic competence through education is essential to ensure that digital participation strengthens democracy rather than weakens it.

### **3. Political Criticism and Political Conflict in Democratic Society**

Political criticism is an essential feature of democracy because it reflects public participation in evaluating governmental performance and policy decisions. Criticism, as defined in the Indonesian dictionary (KBBI), refers to responses or evaluations accompanied by reasoning regarding the strengths and weaknesses of an opinion, work, or issue. Political criticism is specifically directed toward political institutions, policies, and government actions. In democratic society, political criticism functions as a mechanism of social control that encourages accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. When government actions are perceived as fair and responsible, public criticism may decline, but when dissatisfaction arises, criticism becomes a channel for expressing disagreement and encouraging reform.

However, political criticism can also trigger political conflict, especially when it is delivered in provocative, sarcastic, or hostile forms. Political criticism may appear as direct rebuttal, satire, or even harsh personal attacks. Herman et al. (2023) identify various forms of political criticism such as criticism toward the state, criticism of power, criticism of decision-making processes, criticism of public policy, and criticism of resource allocation. These criticisms may strengthen democracy when delivered rationally, but they can also intensify polarization when mixed with hate speech or emotional responses.

Conflict, according to Coser's theory, emerges from differences in values, interests,

and demands related to power and limited resources. Social conflict can occur between individuals, groups, or individuals and groups. Importantly, Coser argues that conflict is not always negative; it can also produce positive social outcomes such as strengthening group solidarity or encouraging social change. Nonetheless, conflict becomes harmful when it leads to hatred, discrimination, or destruction of social cohesion.

In digital environments, political criticism and conflict spread rapidly due to algorithmic amplification and emotional engagement. As a result, political debates often become reactive rather than deliberative. Understanding political criticism and conflict is therefore essential in analyzing students' civic disposition, because students' responses reveal whether they contribute to democratic discourse or reinforce destructive polarization.

#### **4. *Social Media and TikTok as a Space for Digital Political Communication.***

Social media has transformed political communication by enabling citizens to participate directly in political discourse without relying on traditional media channels. Social media platforms function as interactive digital spaces where users can share information, express opinions, and engage with public issues. Qadir (2024) explains that social media is internet-based and allows users to interact, collaborate, and distribute content both as creators and consumers. This participatory nature expands civic engagement but also creates challenges related to misinformation, polarization, and online conflict.

TikTok, as one of the most widely used platforms among young people, has become a significant arena for political content consumption and discussion. TikTok's short-video format, algorithm-driven feed, and viral features make political information spread quickly and widely. According to BPS data (2023), social media use in Indonesia has reached a very high level, and TikTok has become increasingly influential in shaping political attitudes, particularly approaching the 2024 election. With billions of users globally, TikTok has great potential to influence public opinion and political behavior. Sari et al. (2024) argue that exposure to TikTok political content can affect students' political participation and awareness, though the outcomes may differ depending on users' digital literacy and critical skills.

TikTok also has unique characteristics that intensify political dynamics. Its algorithm tends to prioritize sensational and emotionally engaging content, which can strengthen polarization and amplify provocative discourse. During the political campaign period, Kominfo (2024) reported that a significant portion of political content contained negativity and divisive narratives. This indicates that while TikTok can support democracy by expanding political participation, it can also reduce the quality of discourse through conflict and hate speech.

For university students, TikTok is not only a platform for entertainment but also a space where civic identity and citizenship behavior are tested. Students' responses to political content whether they promote dialogue, spread misinformation, or avoid conflict reflect their civic disposition and digital citizenship. Therefore, TikTok is a relevant context for analyzing civic disposition in digital political communication.

#### **5. *Digital Citizenship, Ethics, and Student Responses to Political Conflict***

Digital citizenship refers to the ability of individuals to use digital technology responsibly, ethically, and critically in order to participate constructively in society. In the modern era, political participation increasingly takes place through digital spaces, making digital citizenship essential for maintaining democratic values. Students, as

digital natives, are expected to demonstrate ethical behavior online, including tolerance, respect, and responsibility. Civic disposition becomes closely connected with digital citizenship because both emphasize moral values and responsible participation in public life.

The development of digital platforms has increased opportunities for political engagement but has also created ethical challenges. Political conversations online frequently involve emotional reactions, sarcasm, ridicule, and even hate speech. Sunstein (2017) argues that social media environments often intensify polarization because users are exposed to content that reinforces group identity and emotional bias. In Indonesia, the rise of provocative political content after the 2024 election indicates that digital political participation can become unhealthy when not balanced with digital literacy and ethical awareness. Kominfo (2024) highlights how negative content can contribute to social division and weaken democratic discourse.

Students' responses to political conflict reflect how civic disposition operates in online interaction. Some students display strong civic disposition by checking facts, correcting misinformation, engaging in respectful dialogue, and avoiding provocation. Others may respond with humor or passive observation, which may function as a strategy to avoid conflict but can also limit constructive engagement. However, even passive responses can reflect self-control and ethical awareness, especially if students avoid hate speech and personal attacks.

The importance of civic disposition in digital citizenship lies in its ability to shape healthy political communication. Tolerance and empathy prevent extreme polarization, while critical thinking helps users analyze political information before reacting. Social responsibility motivates students to protect the quality of online discourse. Therefore, strengthening civic disposition is essential for preparing students to be responsible digital citizens who contribute to democratic life through rational, respectful, and ethical engagement in political conversations on platforms such as TikTok

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to analyze the civic disposition of university students in responding to criticism and political conflict toward the government on TikTok social media. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on efforts to understand the meaning, attitudes, and citizenship values of students in the context of digital interaction, rather than on numeric measurement aspects. This is in line with Baxter and Jack (2008), who state that case studies provide opportunities for researchers to examine complex phenomena in real-life contexts through various data sources in order to obtain comprehensive understanding.

The research subjects consisted of 10 UNESA students who actively use TikTok. The selection of participants was carried out using purposive sampling with the following criteria:

- a. actively using TikTok for 6–12 months
- b. having witnessed or been involved in TikTok political interactions, and
- c. being willing to become research informants. The selection of subjects was conducted to ensure relevance and depth of data, as emphasized that the accuracy of participant selection in qualitative research directly influences the depth and validity of data obtained (Assyakurrohim et al., 2022). The case study approach is considered appropriate because it can provide an in-depth description of students'

social behavior in the context of political interaction in digital media.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, digital observation, and documentation. Interviews were used to explore students' experiences, views, and attitudes in responding to criticism and political conflict toward the government on TikTok social media, including their reflections on values of tolerance, empathy, and responsibility as forms of civic disposition. Interviews were recorded in audio form and then transcribed for analysis purposes.

Digital observation was conducted by exploring video content, comment sections, and user interaction forms on political topics. Observation was directed toward communication patterns, expressions of attitude, forms of involvement, and civic disposition tendencies such as tolerance or intolerance. Documentation in the form of screenshots and interaction notes was used for data triangulation.

According to Putri and Murhayati (2025), the selection of data collection techniques in qualitative research must be adjusted to the research focus, field conditions, and the relationship between the researcher and the subjects, to ensure the validity and reliability of the data obtained. The research procedure was carried out through the following stages:

- a. determining participants who meet the criteria and obtaining consent,
- b. conducting initial observation on political-themed TikTok content,
- c. conducting interviews and collecting documentation of digital interactions,
- d. transcribing and categorizing interview and observation data,
- e. developing themes and conducting interpretation,
- f. compiling findings and research reports.

Data analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Miles & Huberman (2014), which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, member checking with informants, and anonymization of students' identities and TikTok accounts to maintain research ethics. Research instruments included semi-structured interview guidelines, digital observation sheets, and audio/video recording tools to ensure that collected data were complete and could be analyzed in depth. Analysis in qualitative research is dynamic and continuous, with interaction between data collection and analysis mutually influencing one another.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results show that TikTok digital space becomes a place where various forms of criticism, satire, and political conflict emerge quite intensely, especially after the 2024 Election. Observations of five political contents show that user interactions are often characterized by debates, polarization, and emotional comments. The discussions that occur are not merely spontaneous responses, but also reflect public involvement in bringing national political dynamics. These findings strengthen that students are not only passive consumers, but also actors who are exposed to and participate in complex digital political situations.

Analysis of comment interactions on the observed content shows two main tendencies. First, the emergence of civic disposition that appears through efforts by some users to discuss argumentatively, link political issues to social realities, and respect differences of opinion. In some content, invitations to discuss, clarify information, and reflect on the importance of public oversight toward government

policies can also be found. Second, the emergence of negative civic disposition, such as emotional comments, fanatic responses toward figures, or personal sarcasm. However, in the context of students who are the subjects of this research, responses of this type tend not to be dominant.

### **1. Civic Disposition**

The development of social media such as TikTok as a space for political discussion requires studies on students' Civic Competences, including how they respond to criticism and political conflict that emerge. There are three divisions of Civic Competences proposed by Branson, namely Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills, and Civic Disposition (Rahayu & Rusdiana, 2022). Civic Knowledge refers to the knowledge that every citizen needs regarding rights and obligations as citizens, especially related to roles in the democratic system and involvement in political participation. Meanwhile, Civic Skills relate to intellectual abilities and participatory skills. Civic Skills are essentially the application of civic knowledge so that such knowledge can be realized in practice. In practice, Civic Skills include the ability to think critically, make wise decisions, and actively participate in political activities responsibly (Rafzan et al., 2020).

Civic Disposition refers to attitudes of willingness and capability in citizenship that include recognition of equality, tolerance, solidarity, acceptance of diversity, and sensitivity to issues related to citizens' lives (Nurmayanti et al., 2023). A basic component of civic education oriented toward both public and private character is civic disposition. According to Branson, civic disposition is divided into private character and public character. Private character includes moral responsibility, self-control ability, and respect for the dignity and worth of every human being. Meanwhile, public character includes care as community members, politeness, obedience to applicable rules, the ability to think critically, willingness to listen, and negotiation and compromise (Zalmi & Montessori, 2022). If a country has citizens with good character, then the future of that country will be good and advanced. Conversely, if citizens have poor character, then national progress in the future will be difficult to achieve (Latipa et al., 2022).

### **2. Political Criticism and Conflict**

Etymologically, the term politics comes from the Greek word polis, meaning city or city-states. Gabriel A. Almond explains that politics is an activity related to controlling the public decision-making process in a society and a certain territory, which is supported by authoritative and coercive tools. Meanwhile, according to Andrew Heywood (1992), politics is a series of activities in a country aimed at forming, maintaining, and changing general rules that regulate collective life, so that it cannot be separated from conflict and cooperation (Viera Valencia & Garcia Giraldo, 2019). Politics is a bridge that society must pass through to achieve order by involving power and negotiation of interests. Therefore, politics becomes an unavoidable activity in social life.

Criticism, according to KBBI, can be understood as a form of response or assessment accompanied by explanation and consideration regarding the good and bad of a work, opinion, or certain matter. Criticism aims to analyze and evaluate the quality of an object proportionally, not merely highlighting deficiencies, but also providing appreciation and recommendations for improvement.

Political criticism is criticism directed at the political sphere. In political activities, there is a policy formulation process that usually gives rise to supporters and opponents.

Because the government is an important part of a country, when the government carries out its duties accountably, transparently, and dynamically, it will generate positive responses from society. Political criticism can take the form of rebuttals in straightforward and direct language, targeting specific objectives, and can also appear as subtle sarcasm or satire. Based on research on issues criticized in the documentary film *The EndGame*, five forms of political criticism were found, namely criticism of the state, criticism of power, criticism of decision-making processes, criticism of public policy, and criticism of allocation (Herman et al., 2023).

Political criticism can become one of the causes of conflict. According to Coser (in Andriyana & Mubarak, 2022), social conflict is a contradiction created due to differences in values or demands related to status, power, and limited resources. The parties involved not only attempt to obtain what they want, but also strive to show superiority, harm, or even destroy others. Coser also explains that conflict can occur between individuals, groups, or between individuals and groups. Conflict theory developed by Coser is within the framework of functionalism, which views that social conflict in society not only has negative impacts, but can also produce positive impacts.

In addition, conflict arises as a result of sharp differences and clashes of interests caused by differing social, political, economic, and cultural backgrounds, which strongly influence conflict triggers. Conflict creates negative attitudes toward a party, system, or mechanism in an organization. Conflict also creates dissatisfaction with the organizational environment, feelings of frustration, discomfort, and so on, which are often difficult to overcome because leaving a group means having to face significant risks (Rais et al., 2023).

Based on several factors that can trigger conflict, one of them is political factors. Indonesia has a number of examples of political conflict in its history, such as the PKI rebellion in Madiun, the 30S/PKI incident, and the PRRI/Permesta movement and DI/TII.

Maswardi Ruaf (2010) explains that essentially, conflict arises due to differences of interest between individuals or groups. When these differences are related to the political sphere, then the conflict can be categorized as political conflict. Maswardi identifies three forms of political conflict. First, conflict that occurs due to competition for positions or political power. Second, conflict triggered by differences over political policies. Third, conflict arising from differences in views regarding political institutions. Furthermore, Maswardi emphasizes that political conflict is one type of social conflict that has similar characteristics to social conflict in general. The difference lies only in the political element attached, namely its connection with the state or government, political officials or administrative government, and policies produced (Gani et al., 2024).

### **3. *TikTok Social Media***

Social media is an internet-based platform that provides opportunities for users to interact, collaborate, and share various types of information in interactive forms. Social media is also viewed as a communication tool that allows users to act as both content creators and content receivers. Since its emergence in the early 2000s, social media has developed rapidly. Starting from simple platforms such as Friendster and MySpace, social media has now become an important part of everyday life for many people. Various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and YouTube are used by millions to billions of users worldwide. Social media is not only used for

communicating with friends and family, but also to expand professional networks, promote businesses, and disseminate information with wider reach (Qadir, 2024).

Based on data from the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2023, the use of social media in Indonesia has grown very rapidly. The number of social media users reached 167 million people, with 153 million of them aged above 18 years, or around 79.5% of the total population. Approaching the 2024 Election, the role of social media became increasingly visible through the rapid spread of political information across various platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. TikTok, as a short video-sharing application, has become one of the most popular platforms globally, especially among young people. With users reaching billions, TikTok has great potential in shaping public opinions and attitudes toward various issues (Sari et al., 2024). Due to its popularity, TikTok is able to reach all social classes, so this media is considered effective as a means of information and communication, building personal branding, building and disseminating ideas and viewpoints (Albarzand et al., 2024).

Based on interviews with ten UNESA students from various study programs and faculties conducted from 17 to 19 November 2025 both offline and online, the following interview results were obtained:

**Table 1. Interview Results of Universitas Negeri Surabaya Students.**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>MHS 01</b>	The student tends to be tolerant and thinks critically toward content considered inappropriate.
<b>MHS 02</b>	Has a strong positive attitude, but responses vary. Sometimes passive, sometimes participates in commenting, and still reports when necessary.
<b>MHS 03</b>	Actively engages in discussions, tries to correct misinformation, and consistently shows a positive civic disposition.
<b>MHS 04</b>	Demonstrates tolerance, responsibility, and critical thinking when responding to political content. Tends to educate others, open dialogue, and actively engage in correcting misinformation, showing awareness of the role as a concerned digital citizen.
<b>MHS 05</b>	Shows a tolerant attitude, provides accurate information to close friends, wants to discuss in a healthy way, and mediates when conflicts arise.
<b>MHS 06</b>	Sometimes becomes provoked and uses sarcasm, as well as humor in responding to issues, and avoids involvement when not interested in the conflict.
<b>MHS 07</b>	Always checks facts first, ignores comments and chooses to keep scrolling, and avoids provocative content.
<b>MHS 08</b>	Has fairly good digital ethics and a critical attitude, but contributes very little to political discussions. Prefers to position themselves as a passive observer.
<b>MHS 09</b>	Tends to be active and caring, and is aware of their role as a digital citizen. More actively educates others and shows stronger critical awareness.
<b>MHS 10</b>	Has strong vigilance, a high level of reflection, and strong political communication skills. Although there is a tendency toward intolerance, there is self-awareness and the student always conducts research before making decisions.

It can be seen through the table above that the interview results show that the majority of students (seven individuals) demonstrated a strong tendency of civic disposition, especially in aspects of tolerance, critical thinking ability, caution in responding to issues, and awareness to maintain a healthy discussion space. They tend to avoid impulsive actions, verify information before responding, and understand that political conflict on social media must be faced with a responsible attitude. Several students also showed readiness to provide clarification or explain information when necessary, indicating the presence of social responsibility and concern for the quality of public conversation.

Meanwhile, the other three students showed civic disposition that is still developing, marked by a tendency to respond to political issues casually through humor or jokes. Although they did not show seriousness in analyzing political situations, they still demonstrated the ability to restrain themselves and not engage in hate speech or personal attacks. Their use of humor can be understood as a psychological strategy to relieve tension, but it also shows that their dimensions of political maturity and digital responsibility are not yet as strong as the other students.

However, no student gave aggressive or emotional responses to provocative content. This indicates that the civic disposition of UNESA students in general is in good condition, especially in aspects of self-control, digital communication ethics, and respect for differences. Although the level of participation differs among students some are more active in discussions and correcting information, while others prefer to observe overall, respondents still show basic citizenship values such as mutual respect, not being easily provoked, and being cautious in expressing opinions.

Thus, the results of this study show that the civic disposition of UNESA students in responding to criticism and political conflict on TikTok tends to be formed in a healthy and constructive manner. They are able to maintain citizenship values such as tolerance, empathy, social responsibility, and critical thinking ability even in a digital environment that is vulnerable to polarization and provocation. Individual character variations remain, but the general tendency indicates that students already have a mature civic disposition foundation to participate in digital spaces while maintaining communication ethics and responsibility.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that UNESA students generally have fairly good civic disposition in responding to criticism and political conflict on TikTok. Most students are able to demonstrate tolerance, caution in responding to issues, and use critical thinking skills when evaluating political information. They also tend to maintain digital communication ethics and avoid involvement in unproductive conflicts. A small number of students respond to political issues with humor or a relaxed attitude, but they still do not show behavior that contradicts citizenship values. Overall, students have a fairly strong awareness of their role as responsible digital citizens.

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