



# Open Access Indonesia Journal of Social Sciences

Journal Homepage: <https://journalsocialsciences.com/index.php/OAIJSS>

## Digital Transformation and Its Role in Improving Democracy: A Systematic Literature Review

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Keywords:

Democracy  
Digital  
Public participation  
Transformation

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All authors have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

<https://doi.org/10.37275/oaijss.v6i3.164>

### ABSTRACT

In order to achieve a more inclusive and robust democracy, it is important to understand the role of digital transformation and how technology can be used as a tool to strengthen public participation, ensure transparency and increase government accountability. By looking at real examples and broader implications of digitalization in the context of democracy, existing opportunities and challenges can be identified, and appropriate policies can be formulated for a better democratic future. This review aimed to describe the digital transformation and its role in improving democracy. Literature search efforts are carried out by searching on search engines using certain keywords. Articles that match the inclusion criteria are reviewed in depth. Digitalization has played an important role in strengthening democracy in an unprecedented way. By expanding public participation, increasing transparency, and strengthening government accountability, digital technology has provided new opportunities for citizens to engage in political processes and effect social change. However, keep in mind that challenges and risks associated with digitization also exist, such as the spread of false information and data privacy.

### 1. Introduction

In an increasingly advanced digital era, technological transformation has affected almost all aspects of our lives, including political and governmental systems. Digitalization has brought about significant changes in the way we communicate, obtain information, and participate in political processes (Broome et al., 2015). In this context, the role of digitalization in enhancing democracy is becoming increasingly important (Bratton, 2015). Democracy, as a system of government based on public participation, freedom of opinion, and fair access to information, continues to develop with the development of digital technology. Digitalization is playing an important role in expanding public

participation, increasing transparency, and strengthening government accountability. Through the use of digital communication technologies, such as social media, online platforms, and online collaboration tools, individuals now have easier access to express their voices and participate in the political process (Cole, 2018).

This study will explore the important role of digital transformation in enhancing democracy and how digitalization has expanded public participation by providing opportunities for individuals who previously did not have access to actively contribute to the political process (Bulovsky, 2019), how digitalization has increased transparency in decision-making processes and strengthened government



accountability. Despite the challenges and risks associated with digitization, we will highlight the benefits that can be generated when technology is used wisely and properly managed (Deibert, 1997).

In order to achieve a more inclusive and robust democracy, it is important to understand the role of digital transformation and how technology can be used as a tool to strengthen public participation, ensure transparency, and increase government accountability (Deibert, 2019). By looking at real examples and broader implications of digitalization in the context of democracy, we can identify opportunities and challenges and formulate appropriate policies for a better future of democracy. This review aimed to describe digital transformation and its role in improving democracy.

## 2. Methods

The literature search process was carried out on various databases (PubMed, Web of Sciences, and

Google Scholar) regarding the transformation digital in democracy. The search was performed using the terms: (1) " Transformation Digital " OR " Democracy " OR" Digitalization for democracy" OR" Digital Transformation in Democracy " AND (2) " Transformation Digital " OR " Democracy." The literature is limited to original studies and published in English. The literature selection criteria are articles published in the form of original articles, a study about transformation digital in democracy, studies were conducted in a timeframe from 2010-2023, and the main outcome was the effect of transformation digital in democracy. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria were original articles that were not related to transformation digital in democracy, the effect of digital transformation in another aspect, and duplication of publications. This study follows the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analysis (PRISMA) recommendations.

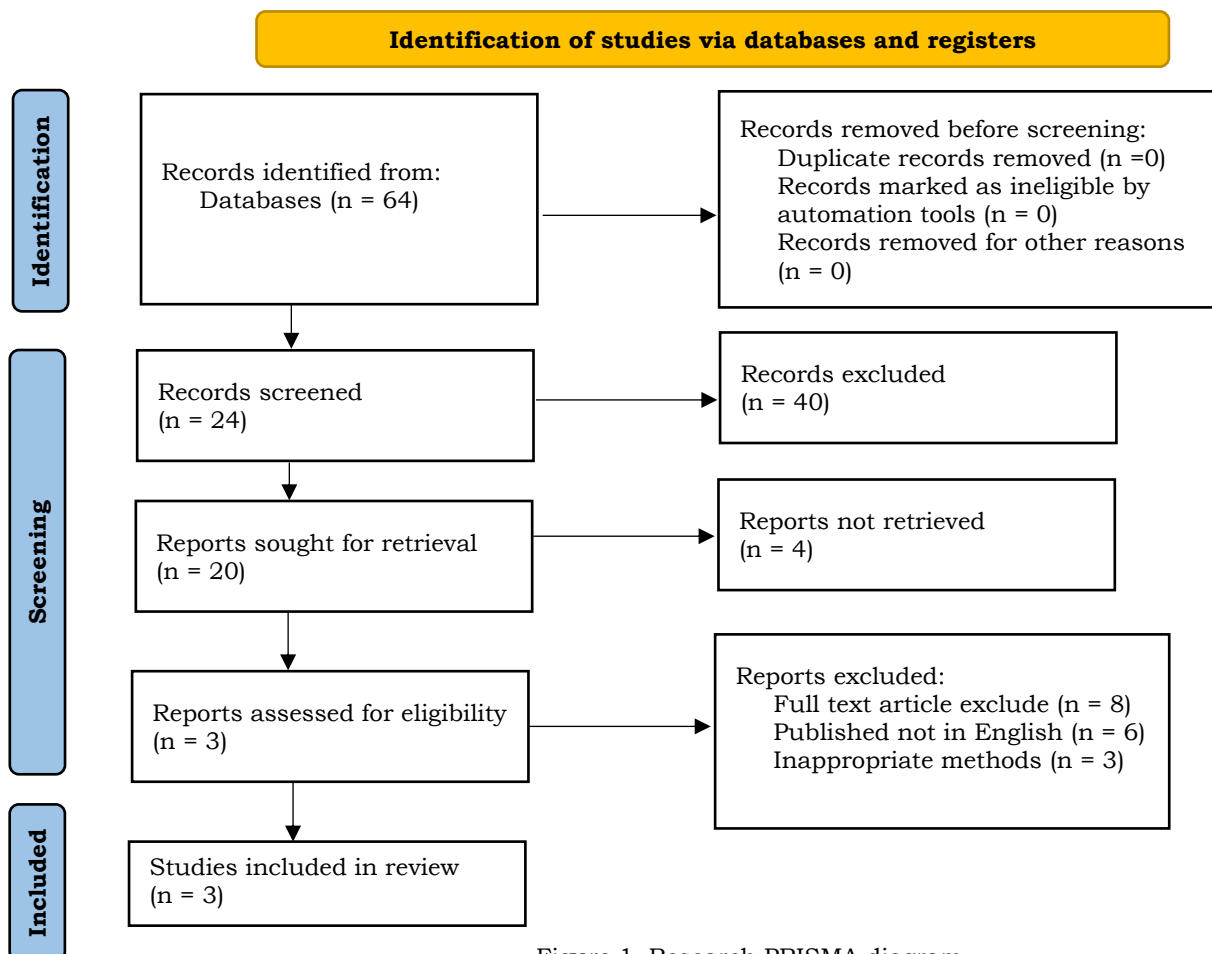


Figure 1. Research PRISMA diagram.



### 3. Results and Discussion

#### Expanded public participation

Digitalization has changed the landscape of public participation in an unprecedented way (Dryzek, 2006; Diamond, 2010). Digital communication technologies, such as social media, online platforms, and online collaboration tools, have provided a new platform for citizens to have their voices heard and participate in public decisions. This expanded participation promotes inclusivity, as individuals who previously did not have access to or opportunity to participate in the political process can now contribute. An example is the use of social media as a means of political expression and social movement organization. Political campaigners and community activists can use social media platforms to mobilize supporters, spread messages, and build awareness about important issues (Hansen et al., 2012). In addition, there are also online platforms that provide forums for direct public participation, such as online petitions and public opinion surveys. Thus, digitalization has provided opportunities for individuals to be actively involved in the political process, strengthening public participation in democracy (Freedom, 2018).

Social media has become a powerful tool for mobilizing supporters and spreading political messages (Howard et al., 2013). Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube enable individuals to quickly and widely share their thoughts, views, and information. Communities can organize campaigns, disseminate information on political issues, and discuss relevant issues. Social media also enables direct interaction between citizens and political leaders, creating a two-way channel of communication that was not possible before.

Apart from social media, online platforms also provide a stage for wider public participation. There are various online platforms that allow citizens to participate in discussion forums, ask questions of political leaders, provide input on public policies, or even contribute directly to decision-making. These

platforms create spaces that are inclusive and allow multiple voices and perspectives to be heard (Khondker, 2011).

Online collaboration tools also play an important role in public participation. For example, platforms for online petitions allow individuals to gather support for certain issues and submit demands to the government (Lessig, 2006). Online collaboration tools also facilitate cooperation between groups of people who have the same goals, enabling them to collaborate in addressing complex social and political issues (Mayer et al., 2014).

Overall, digital communication technologies have opened the door for wider public participation and given citizens a voice in public decisions. This provides an opportunity for individuals who previously did not have access or opportunities to participate actively in the political process. However, it is important to remember that public participation in the digital world also has challenges, such as the spread of false information or unauthorized influence. Therefore, it is important to build strong digital literacy and involve the public in the wise and responsible use of digital communication technology (McMillan, 2020).

#### Transparency in the decision process

One important aspect of democracy is transparency in the decision-making process. Digitalization has played a crucial role in increasing this transparency. Through social media, online platforms, and electronic government applications, relevant information can be easily accessed by the public (O'Neil, 2016). This allows individuals to gain a better understanding of the political decision process and keep abreast of current developments. Moreover, blockchain technology is also emerging as a potentially revolutionary tool for ensuring transparency and integrity in political processes. By using this technology, data, and decisions taken can be recorded openly and cannot be changed. This gives people confidence that the decision process is not affected by corruption or manipulation.



Blockchain technology has indeed emerged as a potentially revolutionary tool for ensuring transparency and integrity in political processes (Papacharissi, 2015). Blockchain is a decentralized database that records transactions publicly and transparently (Polity, 2018). Every transaction recorded in the blockchain cannot be changed or manipulated, thus creating a high level of security and trust. In the context of democracy, blockchain technology can be used to ensure integrity in voting and counting. By using the blockchain, every election transaction, including adding votes and counting votes, can be recorded permanently and cannot be changed. This gives confidence to the public that election results will not be manipulated (Slaughter, 2017).

In addition, blockchain technology can also be used to increase transparency in funding political campaigns. In many countries, there is a requirement to publicly report campaign contributions. Using the blockchain, information about campaign contributions can be recorded and verified in a transparent manner, reducing the risk of corrupt practices or unlawful influence in the political process. Apart from elections and campaign funding, blockchain technology can also be used to strengthen transparency in the management of public budgets. By openly recording every financial transaction on the blockchain, the public can track public spending and ensure that the budget is used effectively and accountably (Srnicek, 2017).

However, it is important to remember that the use of blockchain technology in political and democratic contexts also faces challenges and complexities. For example, considerations of data privacy and security, fair access to technology, and proper regulation need to be taken into account for blockchain technology to be used effectively to increase transparency and integrity in political processes. As such, blockchain technology offers great potential to ensure transparency and integrity in political processes.

However, their implementation must be done carefully and properly regulated to minimize risks and ensure maximum benefits for democracy.

### **Improving government accountability**

Digitalization can also increase government accountability in a democratic context. With the adoption of digital technology, the government can improve reporting mechanisms, accelerate responses to problems that arise, and strengthen preventive measures against corrupt practices. One of the ways digitalization increases government accountability is through the provision of information accessibility and transparency. Governments can use online platforms and official websites to provide relevant information about public policies, budgets, and other government activities. Thus, the public can easily access this information and understand how decisions are made and how public budgets are used (Zuboff, 2019).

In addition, digital technology also allows the government to implement more efficient reporting mechanisms. For example, governments can develop mobile apps or online platforms that allow citizens to report acts of corruption, violations of law, or non-compliance with policies. This gives the community an active role in monitoring the government and exposing violations. Furthermore, digitization can help increase government responsiveness to problems and complaints raised by the public. With the adoption of digital communication technology, the government can establish direct interaction with the public through social media, electronic mail, or other online forums. This allows the government to hear the voice of the people more quickly and respond with appropriate action (Papacharissi, 2010).

Not only that but digitalization can also be used to strengthen preventive measures against corrupt practices and abuse of power. Governments can use electronic audit technology, financial transaction tracking systems, or blockchain technology to ensure that the process of managing public funds is



transparent and accountable. This technology creates a recordable and verifiable footprint, making it more difficult for corrupt practices and enhancing government integrity. Overall, digitalization has great potential to increase government accountability in a democracy. With the adoption of digital technology, governments can provide better information accessibility, improve reporting mechanisms, increase responsiveness to society, and strengthen preventive measures against corruption. However, it is important to maintain data security and privacy and ensure appropriate regulation so that digitalization functions as an effective tool for strengthening government accountability (Papacharissi, 2015).

#### 4. Conclusion

Digitalization has played an important role in strengthening democracy in an unprecedented way. By expanding public participation, increasing transparency, and strengthening government accountability, digital technology has provided new opportunities for citizens to engage in political processes and effect social change. However, keep in mind that challenges and risks associated with digitization also exist, such as the spread of false information and data privacy. Therefore, it is important to develop sound policies and adequate legal frameworks to ensure that digitalization continues to serve as a tool for strengthening democracy and inclusive societies.

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