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CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES: THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This article explores cultural transformation and changes in social interaction within the indigenous community of Negeri Hatusua as a result of the introduction of digital technology, particularly smartphones and the internet. The main objective of this study is to uncover the shifts in values and norms within family structures as well as changes in social communication patterns in the digital era. The research adopts a qualitative approach through data collection techniques such as in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Findings indicate that the presence of digital technology has shifted the community's communication patterns from face-to-face interaction to indirect communication through digital devices. This shift affects relationships among family and community members, particularly in terms of information exchange and the practice of customary values. These findings affirm that digital technology plays a significant role in driving social and cultural change in indigenous societies, supporting previous studies and expanding the understanding of how local cultures adapt to global technological developments. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on indigenous communities, which have been relatively underrepresented in studies on digital technology. The study recommends strengthening digital literacy grounded in local wisdom to ensure that cultural transformations preserve indigenous identity and social cohesion. This research provides a valuable contribution to the development of the social sciences and humanities, particularly in understanding the impact of technology on traditional cultural values and social structures.

Keywords: *Cultural Transformation, Digital Technology, Indigenous Society, Social Change, Social Interaction*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, digital technology has penetrated nearly all aspects of human life, including indigenous communities that were previously known for having relatively stable systems of values and norms (Abubakre et al., 2021; Elbanna & Idowu, 2022). Amidst the rapid spread of internet access and smartphone usage, cultural transformation is no longer confined to urban areas but has also begun to influence indigenous communities such as those in Negeri Hatusua. These communities, which once highly valued direct communication, physical togetherness, and the embodiment of customary values through face-to-face interaction, are gradually experiencing a shift in how they build social relationships, particularly within the family.

The central issue this study seeks to examine is how social change unfolds in indigenous communities when digital technology becomes part of everyday life. This phenomenon is not merely a shift in communication tools but also affects the fabric of social relationships and cultural values. Empirical evidence from preliminary observations shows that smartphone usage has altered the communication patterns in Hatusua from primarily face-to-face interactions to more individual, text-based, or media-based exchanges. This raises critical questions about whether customary values—such as respect, communal deliberation, and strong social bonds—remain intact or are being eroded in the digital era.

Previous studies have highlighted the impact of digital technology on social life. Castells (2023), through his theory of the "network society," emphasizes that the internet reshapes social structures and patterns of human relationships. In the Indonesian context, Bräuchler (2019), Lee et al. (2020), and Priadi & Thariq (2023) point out how digital media facilitate new spaces for cultural expression, although they sometimes cause value conflicts between traditional and modern systems. Research by Abdullah et al. (2019), Briandana & Mohamad Saleh (2022), and Saptorini et al. (2022) notes that society is undergoing a reorientation in its understanding of communication due to the growing dominance of digital media. On the other hand, Depari & Lindell (2023) and Kasih et al. (2021) observe that indigenous communities face a dilemma between preserving ancestral values and adapting to the inescapable realities of the digital world.

More specifically, studies by Rico et al. (2022), Sada et al. (2019), and Warsilah (2023) show that social media use among Dayak youth has affected communication patterns and social roles within the community. Meanwhile, research by Ecclestone (2020), Hariyanto et al. (2021), and Poerwoningsih et al. (2022) examines how indigenous communities in East Nusa Tenggara are beginning to use technology to document their culture, despite concerns about the loss of symbolic meaning in face-to-face interaction. Studies by Carolus et al. (2019) and Thulin et al. (2020) also highlight that the family, as the smallest social unit, is experiencing changes in dynamics due to the frequent use of smartphones by its members. Globally, research by Kellerman (2022) and Twenge et al. (2019) indicates that although technology expands social networks, emotional closeness and the quality of face-to-face interactions may decline.

Other studies, such as Miller et al. (2019) in the Why We Post project, show that while people around the world use digital media in unique and localized ways, there are still changes in social norms, particularly in the context of interpersonal relationships. In Indonesia, Kiptiah (2023) and Radyati & Tjahjono (2021) note that the value of mutual cooperation (gotong royong) is beginning to change within indigenous communities in Kalimantan due to the arrival of digital platforms. In another context, Fahmi & Aswirna (2022) reveal that WhatsApp usage among indigenous communities in West Sumatra opens up new spaces for negotiation between tradition and modernity.

Nevertheless, most of these studies focus on digital dynamics in urban settings or in

indigenous communities already integrated into broader economic and political sectors. Few studies have deeply examined how family values and norms change gradually within relatively isolated indigenous communities with limited digital exposure. Negeri Hatusua, an indigenous community in Maluku, has not been widely studied in this context. Yet, social changes in communities like Hatusua hold unique dynamics that often remain hidden beneath the surface.

It is within this framework that it becomes essential to closely examine how indigenous communities such as Hatusua navigate these changing times. Not simply through the lens of resistance or acceptance, but through the negotiation of old values with the new realities brought by digital devices. This opens the door to contributing new insights in the social sciences and humanities—that digital technology does not automatically erase customary values but rather compels them to transform and find new forms in increasingly virtual spaces. This study seeks to capture those moments of change, when tradition and technology meet and begin a dialogue.

Based on this background, the main objective of this research is to understand how family values and norms within the indigenous community of Negeri Hatusua have changed since the arrival of digital technology, particularly smartphones and the internet. The study aims to capture subtle yet profound shifts in how people interact, communicate, and maintain their identities amid the fast currents of globalization.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with phenomenological methodology as the basis of analysis, as this approach allows the researcher to deeply explore the subjective experiences of informants—particularly how they make sense of the changes brought by digital technology in their daily lives. As explained by Alhazmi & Kaufmann (2022) and Neubauer et al. (2019), the phenomenological approach seeks to uncover the meanings of lived experiences within individuals' social and cultural contexts. In this case, the indigenous people of Negeri Hatusua, who traditionally practiced oral and face-to-face communication, are now engaging through digital media that influence their ways of thinking, behaving, and forming new values.

The selection of Negeri Hatusua as the research site is deliberate. This indigenous community on Seram Island, Maluku, continues to uphold traditional values but has begun to experience significant technological penetration over the past five years. On one hand, Hatusua retains its customary structure, community deliberation (musyawarah negeri), and collective social practices. On the other hand, smartphones and internet access have become part of daily life, particularly among younger generations and young families. Hatusua's unique position—at the crossroads of cultural preservation and technological adaptation—makes it a relevant and significant site for exploring the dynamics of social transformation.

Informants were selected through purposive sampling, considering their active involvement in community life and their experiences with social changes caused by digital technology. Informants come from diverse age groups, including customary leaders, heads of

households, housewives, youths, and students. The total number of informants was 15, although this number remained flexible, as qualitative research determines participant numbers based on the principle of data saturation—when no new information or insights emerge from additional interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Guest et al., 2020). The diversity of informant profiles was chosen to capture change dynamics from multiple perspectives, including generations that lived before and after the arrival of digital technology.

Data collection was conducted using three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were semi-structured to allow the researcher to explore informants' narratives and interpretations of value and norm transformations within the family and indigenous community. Open-ended questions were used to give informants space to express their experiences and reflections in their own words. This technique is considered most appropriate as it allows for uncovering deeper meanings that are not easily captured through quantitative surveys (Guest et al., 2020).

In addition to interviews, participatory observation was carried out to capture dimensions of social interaction that are not always expressible through words. The researcher actively participated in community activities such as family meetings, customary events, and religious ceremonies that serve as key spaces for social interaction. Through this method, the researcher observed changes in communication patterns, social gestures, and the presence of digital devices in social spaces that were previously more communal and offline. This field experience provided rich context for understanding the narratives emerging from the interviews.

Meanwhile, document analysis was conducted by examining local archives, records of customary deliberations, family documents, and materials such as historical accounts and oral narratives still used within the community. These documents provided a historical and cultural framework for the values traditionally upheld, which are now beginning to shift with the advent of digital technology.

For data analysis, a phenomenological approach was used to identify deeper meanings from informants' experiences. The analysis involved several stages: open coding to identify meaning units, thematic grouping to find patterns of similar experiences, and the construction of interpretative narratives representing the social changes taking place. This process was carried out iteratively by rereading interview transcripts, comparing them with observation notes, and referencing relevant documents to ensure that the derived meanings were not partial.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the study employed triangulation techniques. Triangulation was done by comparing data from interviews, participatory observations, and analyzed documents, so that each finding could be confirmed by more than one data source (Santos et al., 2020). Additionally, member checks were conducted by asking informants to review summaries of their interviews and the researcher's preliminary interpretations of their experiences. This step was crucial to ensure that the researcher's interpretations accurately reflected the authentic experiences of the informants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Transportation, Communication, and Information Facilities in Hatusua Village

Hatusua Village is a coastal area with fertile land suitable for agriculture and plantations, and it possesses substantial marine resources. The land consists of lowlands (coastal plains) and highlands (coral hills). The lowlands are characterized by humus-rich red soil that supports various crops such as bananas, cassava, and corn. Perennial plants like coconut, avocado, and mango also grow abundantly in Hatusua. The hilly areas are used for clove and nutmeg plantations, which are the mainstay commodities. Most of the residents make a living through farming and gardening, while some work as traders in Piru and Masohi (the capital of Central Maluku Regency), and others in Ambon City. The climate in Hatusua is generally similar to that of other villages in the region, experiencing both dry and rainy seasons interspersed with transitional periods. The dry season usually occurs from January to June, while the rainy season typically lasts from July to December, although seasonal changes can sometimes be unpredictable.

Hatusua Village traces its lineage back to Nunusaku and has gone through a long journey before settling in its current coastal location. The present-day Hatusua is the third iteration of the village, following its original establishment in Hatuurang, and later relocation to a coastal area that submerged in September 1819. The sinking of the second site coincided with an earthquake in Elpaputih that caused many fatalities. The third and current location was then chosen as the new site for Hatusua. Philosophically, the name “Hatusua” means “the land of gathered stones,” a reference to the seven ancestral clans who collected stones to build the village and their homes. The village is inhabited by these seven original clans and is divided into four soa (kinship groups): Soa Niak, Soa Amalene, Soa Uriattu, and Soa Leihalat, with the clans distributed among them.

Transportation is vital for daily life in Hatusua. Available land transport includes four-wheeled and two-wheeled vehicles, both privately owned and public. Public four-wheeled transport is commonly used to travel to Kairatu District or to the capital of West Seram Regency in Piru. Due to Hatusua’s proximity to Waipirit Ferry Port and Waimital Village (home to Gemba Market), local residents frequently use motorcycle taxis (ojek) and motor rickshaws (bentor). Traveling to Kairatu’s center or Gemba Market typically costs IDR 10,000 by ojek and IDR 20,000 by bentor.

Communication and information infrastructure in Hatusua has progressed in step with current technological developments. Most residents now own mobile phones and smartphones. The presence of a Telkomsel tower in the village has significantly improved network access, enabling reliable telephone and internet connectivity. Additionally, internet access is enhanced through WiFi installations in local schools and the village office, providing the community with better access to information.

Adoption and Adaptation of Digital Technology in Hatusua

The introduction of mobile phones and the internet into Hatusua marks a technological journey that has reshaped the community's social and cultural landscape. In the early 2000s, mobile phones were introduced, initially adopted by a few. Gradually, acceptance grew as they enabled easier and faster communication both within and beyond Hatusua. By the 2010s, the internet began entering the community, significantly altering communication patterns and social interaction. Initially limited and used by only a few, the internet's impact slowly became evident in various aspects of daily life. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, dependence on the internet surged. Social restrictions and work-from-home policies made the internet the primary tool for communication, education, and work.

This trend permeated all levels of society. Children used the internet for distance learning and accessing online educational materials, while youth and adults relied on it for work, information, and social communication. This dependency marked a significant shift in how the community engaged with the outside world.

However, this technological reliance also introduced challenges. The shift from face-to-face interaction to screen-based communication altered traditional social norms. Values once maintained through direct interactions began to change as digital communication became more prevalent. Beyond mobile phone and internet use, the Hatusua community has adapted to social media platforms. Over time, residents began using Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, TikTok, and WhatsApp. This marked a step toward broader digital integration, enabling them to connect beyond their traditional networks and share their stories and experiences.

Social media expanded their social networks, facilitated long-distance communication, and provided access to diverse information sources. It also marked a shift in communication preferences, from face-to-face to text, image, and video messaging. Not only ordinary citizens but also traditional leaders have adopted social media. The village chief (raja) uses platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook to communicate with residents, disseminate decisions, share news, and engage in discussions.

Despite these benefits, social media use also presents cultural and privacy challenges. The community must navigate digital dynamics, including concerns about personal data and the cultural implications of online interactions. Hence, there's a need to balance digital openness with cultural preservation. The community's social media use illustrates dynamic adaptation—integrating new technologies while maintaining cultural heritage.

Negotiation Between Technology and Local Wisdom

This section explores how the indigenous people of Hatusua have neither fully rejected nor blindly accepted digital technology. Instead, they engage in a cultural and social negotiation reflecting how local values interact dynamically with global technologies. The community members are not merely users but also co-creators of new meanings through technology.

Such negotiations are evident in how traditional leaders and residents adjust their cultural practices to accommodate digital realities. One striking example is the use of extended family WhatsApp groups for communication and deliberation, which previously took place in village halls or traditional houses. These groups enable swift dissemination and discussion of matters like traditional meeting schedules, social fund collections, and family decisions—even when members are geographically dispersed.

One traditional leader, S., explained that he no longer needs to wait for relatives to return home to communicate decisions. He simply types them in the group chat, summarizes the deliberation, and awaits feedback. Although not all discussions can be conducted digitally, WhatsApp significantly eases communication and coordination. In this case, technology supplements rather than replaces traditional consensus-building.

Field observations affirm this. In a visit to a senior elder's home, it was observed that he owned two smartphones—one dedicated to managing family and community WhatsApp groups. His living room also featured an information board used for recording customary events, now complemented by digital announcements, demonstrating integration rather than replacement.

Facebook has also become a negotiation space, particularly among indigenous youth. They actively share documentation of traditional ceremonies such as the inauguration of the raja, cuci negeri rituals, and local commemorations. One youth, R., shared that their posts are not merely for digital presence but also to showcase that their culture is alive. Here, social media reinforces local identity and shares it with broader audiences.

This phenomenon aligns with Robertson's (2020) concept of "glocalization," which posits that globalization does not necessarily erase local cultures but can create new platforms for local expression in global forms. In Hatusua, social media serves as a glocalized space where traditional values are reinterpreted through digital logic without losing their essence. Community members retain core customs—such as deliberation, mutual cooperation, and respect for traditional structures—while adjusting the mode of expression to suit faster and more flexible media.

Nevertheless, this transformation is not without ambivalence. While digital efficiency in spreading information is appreciated, some elders express concern over declining direct participation in traditional ceremonies. Younger generations are seen to prefer watching event documentation on their phones rather than attending in person. This raises worries that the symbolic and spiritual power of physical presence and interaction may fade.

During a recent traditional annual ritual, it was observed that while the event remained vibrant, youth attendance had noticeably declined compared to previous years. Some chose to record and upload the ceremony to social media rather than actively engage in it. This highlights how digitalization creates new forms of engagement that may not fully align with collective participatory values upheld by the community.

Cultural transformation due to digital technology in Hatusua is not a binary of acceptance or rejection but a complex negotiation. The indigenous community demonstrates an adaptive capacity to filter, absorb, and reinterpret digital elements within their value systems. As

Thompson (2020) suggests, digital mediation creates new social spaces where meanings and values are continuously negotiated in changing contexts. Within this framework, the indigenous community is not a passive object of technological change but an active subject creatively adapting while preserving its cultural foundation.

Social Tensions and New Cultural Adaptations

As digital technology began to penetrate various aspects of life in the indigenous community of Hatusua, social dynamics emerged that were not always harmonious. The cultural transformation, particularly marked by the use of smartphones and the internet, has triggered intergenerational tensions—visible in daily conversations and traditional meetings. The older generation, who grew up in an environment where face-to-face communication, symbolic respect, and customary social structures were strictly upheld, perceived rapid changes in interaction patterns as contributing to a decline in politeness and etiquette. One customary leader, L., stated in an interview, “Children today sometimes forget to use polite language when messaging elders. They don’t speak in person, even though that is important in our traditions.”

These tensions become more complex when involving customary practices and methods of social coordination. The tradition of deliberation (musyawarah), usually conducted in rumah adat (customary houses) or village halls—rich with symbols, body language, and collective values—is gradually being replaced by more practical and faster digital communication. Some younger members find that discussions through WhatsApp groups or online meetings are more efficient and allow for their participation, especially for those living outside the village. However, for the older generation, these forms of communication diminish the spiritual and social significance of customary interactions, as values such as physical presence, eye contact, and direct dialogue are essential parts of their cultural expression. Field observations reveal that while some customary meetings now begin with online discussions, they are still concluded with face-to-face gatherings—signaling a form of ongoing cultural compromise.

This ambivalence lies at the heart of the adaptation process, highlighting that the acceptance of technology is never entirely positive or negative, but always accompanied by anxiety, concern, and hope (Afdhal et al., 2023). In Hatusua, digital technology symbolizes both opportunity and threat—it opens new spaces for participation by the younger generation and diaspora, while simultaneously raising concerns about the erosion of sacred customary values.

In response to these dynamics, adaptive strategies have started to emerge from within customary institutions. For instance, in some cases, the use of digital media is informally regulated by customary leaders, such as prohibiting the sharing of photos or videos of specific ceremonies on social media without prior approval, or appointing digital group moderators who are knowledgeable about customary language and etiquette. These initiatives indicate that adaptation does not mean total submission to the logic of technology, but rather building a new form of social governance rooted in traditional values. In one customary meeting, for example, a collective decision was made to establish a dedicated WhatsApp group for elder leaders, separate

from general groups, to ensure that sensitive discussions remain in a respectful and closed environment.

Table 1 Dynamics of Tension and Adaptive Strategies of Customary Institutions

Socio-Cultural Aspect	View of the Older Generation	View of the Younger Generation	Adaptive Strategies by Customary Institution
Communication Style	Prefer face-to-face interaction.	View digital communication as more practical.	Divide sessions: digital for information, face-to-face for decisions.
Etiquette and Politeness Values	Believe digital communication erodes customary ethics.	Feel politeness remains as long as context and intent are clear.	Provide digital etiquette education grounded in tradition.
Participation in Deliberation	Must be physically present as a sign of respect.	Online communication allows participation of the diaspora.	Hybrid system: combining online and offline meetings.
Documentation of Customary Events	Not all events should be publicly shared digitally.	View uploading as a form of cultural preservation.	Informal publication rules set by customary leaders.

Source: Research Findings (2023)

These dynamics suggest that intergenerational negotiations are not merely conflictual but serve as important arenas for the emergence of new cultural forms that remain anchored in local identity. Adaptation is not always smooth, but it opens space for collective reflection on the direction of change. Ultimately, these social tensions serve as a sign that the indigenous community is not passively swept away by technological currents, but actively seeks to domesticate technology in ways aligned with their values.

Identity, Cohesion, and Contextual Digital Literacy

The changes experienced by the indigenous community of Hatusua as a result of digital technology's entry have brought about complex social implications, particularly concerning cultural identity, social cohesion, and the need for contextual digital literacy. On one hand, the indigenous community is no longer confined to a social space limited to the local environment but has entered a broader digital landscape. Social media, instant messaging apps, and various digital platforms have become new arenas where cultural identity is renegotiated. As stated by one informant, YK, a young indigenous artist active in the local arts community, he feels more confident showcasing cultural elements in digital form because it allows him to reach more people, including members of the Hatusua diaspora outside Maluku. He remarked that digital media gives him a new way to "preserve tradition, but in a way young people can understand." This illustrates what Kellerman (2022) describe as hybrid digital identity—a fusion of retained local values with global technology, selectively and contextually adopted.

However, openness to the global digital stream does not occur without friction. Field observations at several traditional events revealed implicit tensions when some young people chose to document rituals on their phones rather than engage in them with solemnity. During a

ritual of customary land closure, the researcher noted that some teenagers were more occupied with live-streaming the ceremony on social media than actively participating in the rite. This situation raised concern from a customary elder, ST, who, in an interview, remarked, “Kids today look at their screens more than they listen to the elders.” This tension reflects a potential value conflict between digital modernity and the depth of collective customary experience, especially in the absence of knowledge bridges that contextualize the use of technology within local cultural frameworks.

Table 2 Dynamics of Socio-Cultural Transformation Triggered by Digital Technology in Negeri Hatusua

Socio-Cultural Aspect	View of the Older Generation	View of the Younger Generation	Adaptive Strategies by Customary Institution
Cultural Identity	Emergence of hybrid digital identities among indigenous youth—local traditions are reinterpreted in digital content.	Young people use Instagram and TikTok to share traditional dances, songs, and ritual practices.	Local identity remains alive through digital expression, but cultural narratives must be reinforced to avoid reduction to aesthetics.
Participation in Rituals	Shift from active participation to documentative roles—rituals become objects of digital content.	Observations during traditional ceremonies show teenagers focusing more on recording videos than on engaging in the rituals.	Risk of symbolic meaning erosion unless values are continually taught alongside digital engagement.
Community Social Cohesion	Digital communication creates new interaction spaces (e.g., WhatsApp groups, Facebook), yet triggers tension in message interpretation.	Community elders express concern about misunderstandings arising from direct language in chat groups, which is perceived as disrespectful.	Culturally rooted digital communication etiquette is urgently needed.
Intergenerational Relations	Older generations feel alienated, while younger generations see digital technology as liberating for cultural expression.	Interviews with elders reveal a sentiment that technology “destroys respectful and polite speaking traditions.”	Growing intergenerational tension requires adaptive cultural dialogue as a bridge.
Contextual Digital Literacy	Lack of understanding of how to use digital tools in alignment with local customs, especially among older members.	No formal training or structured guidance currently exists on digital technology usage within indigenous cultural contexts.	A contextualized digital literacy program grounded in local wisdom is urgently needed.

Source: Research Findings (2023)

In this context, social cohesion is also at stake. Technology that facilitates communication across distances does not automatically strengthen internal solidarity. In fact, in several

instances, digital communication has become a source of misunderstanding due to the lack of symbolic and affective expressions typically present in face-to-face interaction. Some informants expressed frustration that debates in extended family WhatsApp groups often became heated because the customary nuance was absent when expressing criticism. The use of flat and direct language was often interpreted as impolite. This indicates that digital media has not yet been fully mastered as a communication tool aligned with customary values, highlighting the need for new approaches in guiding indigenous communities to understand and navigate digital spaces wisely.

Therefore, the need for digital literacy rooted in local wisdom is becoming increasingly urgent. Digital literacy must go beyond teaching how to use devices or applications—it must also include an understanding of customary communication values adapted to digital platforms. Such literacy will enable indigenous communities not only to be passive users of technology but also to become meaning-makers who are aware of their cultural identity. Strengthening contextual digital literacy is also key to preserving cultural identity amid the onslaught of digital globalization, while reinforcing internal social cohesion so that cultural transformation does not lead to value disorientation. As reflected in the selective approach taken by some indigenous youth in choosing content and methods of cultural expression on social media, there is great potential for indigenous communities to harness technology as a tool for cultural empowerment—not merely a channel for entertainment or pragmatic communication.

CONCLUSION

The cultural transformation and changes in social interaction within the indigenous community of Hatusua, brought about by the entry of digital technology—particularly smartphones and the internet—demonstrate that community adaptation to technological development does not occur linearly or passively. Instead, it is shaped through a complex negotiation between traditional values and the demands of the times. This study successfully fulfills its main objective: to reveal the shifts in values and norms within family structures and patterns of social communication in the digital era. The findings show that technology has driven a transition from face-to-face communication—direct, symbolic, and deeply rooted in tradition—toward more efficient but often socially diluted indirect interactions. This shift has sparked tensions, especially between the older generation, who view technology as “eroding politeness” and accelerating the loss of customary values, and the younger generation, who see it as a new space to grow and renegotiate their cultural identity. However, beyond these tensions, the study also finds evidence of cultural resilience in the form of adaptive strategies carried out by the community—such as the use of WhatsApp and Facebook by customary leaders and youth to disseminate traditional values, convey deliberation outcomes, and promote local culture. These findings reinforce theories of technological ambivalence and the concept of glocalization, wherein digital technologies are locally processed and become part of new social practices that

do not entirely sever communities from their cultural roots.

ETHICAL STATEMENT AND DISCLOSURE

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles, including informed consent, protection of informants' confidentiality, and respect for local cultural values. Special consideration was given to participants from vulnerable groups to ensure their safety, comfort, and equal rights to participate. No external funding was received, and the authors declare no conflict of interest. All data and information presented were collected through valid research methods and have been verified to ensure their accuracy and reliability. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) was limited to technical assistance for writing and language editing, without influencing the scientific substance of the work. The authors express their gratitude to the informants for their valuable insights, and to the anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback on an earlier version of this manuscript. The authors take full responsibility for the content and conclusions of this article.

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